

# 2019 Proposed Texas AFT Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions

**FIRST EDITION**

JUNE 7, 2019



JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

**CONVENTION**

AND **PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE**



# 2019 PROPOSED TEXAS AFT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

**SEE NAME BADGE FOR TEXAS AFT COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT**

## COMMITTEES

### **Organizational Affairs**

Shelley Potter - Chair  
Room: Azalea 4

### **Constitutional Amendments**

Ken Zarifis - Chair  
Room: Azalea 5

### **Workers' Rights and Benefits**

Dr. Nancy Vera - Chair  
Room: Azalea 6

### **Professional Issues**

Rena Honea - Chair  
Room: Pecan

### **Educational Issues**

Veronica Hernandez - Chair  
Room: Willow

### **Resolutions**

Nikki Cowart - Chair

## RESOLUTIONS

**8, 9, 10, 11**

**Proposed amendments to the  
Texas AFT Constitution and/or Bylaws**

**12, 13, 14, 15**

**4, 5, 6, 7**

**1, 2, 3**

All resolutions from locals received after May 10, 2019 may be accepted until 2:00 p.m. on June 7, 2019. **Author must provide 200 copies for the delegates.**



# EDUCATIONAL ISSUES



JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

CONVENTION

AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE



# RESOLUTION 1

## PUBLIC EDUCATION INVESTMENT AND THE FIGHT AGAINST AUSTERITY

1  
2  
3  
4  
5 WHEREAS, well-funded public schools and public services are the foundation  
6 of vibrant, safe and healthy communities for all; and

7 WHEREAS, some sectors of our economy have steadily recovered since the  
8 Great Recession, but the real winners have been the wealthiest Americans,  
9 while investment in public services has lagged and wages have stagnated,  
10 hollowing out the middle class; and

11 WHEREAS, the lack of investment as well as opposition to tax cuts for the  
12 rich have ignited worker activism across the country in traditionally  
13 conservative states like Texas; and

14 WHEREAS, too often, officials take from one needed service to pay for  
15 another;

16 WHEREAS, enrollment in Texas public schools has risen by more than  
17 750,000 student since 2008, but there are fewer educators and support staff  
18 working in schools today than there were in that year; and

19 WHEREAS, Texas still provides less overall state support to public institutions  
20 of higher education than prior to the recession; and

21 WHEREAS, over half of faculty in higher education now work on a contingent  
22 basis, too often earning less than a living wage at a time when tuition for  
23 public higher education has risen by an average of 35 percent since 2008,  
24 and the toll of outstanding student debt now stands at more than \$1.3  
25 trillion; and

26 WHEREAS, this lack of investment in our colleges and universities has put  
27 faculty, staff and their families at economic risk and jeopardized their ability  
28 to pursue their goals in higher education; and

29 WHEREAS, the continued diversion of public dollars to private K-12 schools,  
30 unregulated charter schools and for-profit colleges worsens these conditions  
31 because, as a growing body of research shows, a system of public schools  
32 cannot sustain the loss of revenue from students who leave without  
33 undermining the ability to provide services for the students who remain; and

34 WHEREAS, the intentional and systematic disinvestment created by these  
35 policies has starved our public schools and public services of the resources  
36 they need and has threatened the ability of those who work in the schools to  
37 provide for their families, made worse by the fact that wages have actually  
38 decreased as a result of wage stagnation, while pension and healthcare  
39 benefits have been eroded due to austerity; and

40 WHEREAS, austerity has harmed our healthcare system, contributing to  
41 nurse shortages, efforts to impose cruel work requirements for Medicaid  
42 recipients, and a rise in the number of uninsured; and

43 WHEREAS, these choices have ignited worker activism across the country—in  
44 Arizona, Colorado, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma and West Virginia,  
45 for example—where educators have walked off the job in order to defend  
46 students, communities and their families from the impact of these policies;  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, these demonstrations against austerity are leading to a growing  
49 awareness and appetite in the public that something must be done to  
50 combat the choices by states and the federal government to lavish tax cuts  
51 on the rich rather than invest in people:



52 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will double down on our fight against**  
53 **austerity by investigating legislative, policy and grass-roots**  
54 **solutions to increase investment in public services, including the**  
55 **identification of new revenue streams; and**

56 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will work to channel the activism we are**  
57 **witnessing across our union in this moment into a movement for**  
58 **enduring change by electing pro-public education, pro-worker**  
59 **candidates in 2020; and**

60 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will work to educate our members and**  
61 **the communities we serve on these issues in order to elect officials**  
62 **who will address the lack of investment in public education and**  
63 **public services; and ensure that public education, public services and**  
64 **healthcare have the resources needed to provide working people**  
65 **access to higher education, a good quality of life and a dignified**  
66 **retirement; and**

67 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will pursue partnerships with**  
68 **organizations and facilitate partnerships among affiliates with local**  
69 **and state organizations that share the goal of increased public**  
70 **investment in public services; and**

71 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and our affiliates will continue to work to**  
72 **advance programs and policies at the state and local levels to**  
73 **adequately fund all public services without compromising other**  
74 **services.**

75

76 *Submitted by Texas AFT President Louis Malfaro*

1 **RESOLUTION 2**

2 **RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT EXPANSION OF**  
3 **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**  
4 **COURSES**

5  
6 WHEREAS, the American Society of Civil Engineers has estimated that the  
7 United States will need to invest more than \$3.6 trillion in infrastructure to  
8 rebuild, rehabilitate and repair our nation’s schools, public parks, roads,  
9 bridges, dams, transit systems, drinking water systems and other basic  
10 foundations of this nation’s prosperity and health by the year 2020; and

11 WHEREAS, there is an obvious need to rebuild, rehabilitate and repair entire  
12 communities that are blighted with dilapidated, unsafe, unused and outdated  
13 structures; and

14 WHEREAS, as the American workforce ages out, there is currently a  
15 resurgence in manufacturing, cuisine, transportation, healthcare, advanced  
16 computer technology and other fields, and a need to train replacements; and

17 WHEREAS, career and technical education, which includes the STEAM  
18 (science, technology, engineering, arts/design and math) fields, not only  
19 prepares our students for today’s and tomorrow’s workforce but is an  
20 essential determinant in the economic development in our cities, states and  
21 nation; and

22 WHEREAS, career and technical education provides Americans with a school-  
23 to-careers connection and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated  
24 workforce, which fosters productivity in business and industry and  
25 contributes to America’s leadership in the international marketplace; and

26 WHEREAS, career and technical education gives high school students  
27 experience in practical, meaningful applications of skills such as reading,

28 writing and mathematics, thus improving the quality of their education,  
29 motivating potential dropouts and giving all students leadership  
30 opportunities in their fields and in their communities, and CTE offers  
31 individuals lifelong opportunities to learn new skills that will provide them  
32 with career choices and potential satisfaction; and

33 WHEREAS, a large percentage of students do not have the desire to attend  
34 college but are better served by a postsecondary education that prepares  
35 them for a productive and satisfying career without a traditional college  
36 education:

37 **RESOLVED, that the Texas American Federation of Teachers,**  
38 **including its locals and affiliated organizations, support and will**  
39 **advocate for the development, implementation and restoration of**  
40 **elementary school, middle school and high school exploration**  
41 **programs linked to career and technical education programs of study**  
42 **in school districts across Texas, including creating pre-**  
43 **apprenticeship programs in our schools in partnership with our local**  
44 **union apprenticeship programs and union leaders; and**

45 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT and its locals will support the**  
46 **expansion of CTE programs in Texas to reflect and keep pace with**  
47 **the changing job market and future career demands.**

48

49 *Submitted by Cy-Fair AFT*

# RESOLUTION 3

## RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TEXAS AFT- FIRST BOOK PARTNERSHIP

WHEREAS, Texas AFT and our locals and organizing committees have distributed over one-million books across the state in partnership with First Book, and

WHEREAS, our union understands the importance of every student having access to quality books and to building their own home library, and

WHEREAS, the partnership with First Book has created new opportunities for member engagement in our union and has open the door to new union/school district partnerships, and

WHEREAS, First Book events and school distribution of First Book resources has given our union another way to connect with potential members by demonstrating how we fight for students and families to have more educational resources,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will support all locals that wish to engage members in the work of First Book by registering members for the First Book Marketplace, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will assist locals that wish to create marketing and outreach plans to promote First Book events and registration on First Book Marketplace within their communities.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will seek partnerships with other entities to promote First Book events and registration on First Book Marketplace within our locals and communities.**

27

28 *Submitted by Socorro AFT*



# PROFESSIONAL ISSUES



JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

CONVENTION

AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE





1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29

**RESOLUTION 4**  
**SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, the Texas American Federation of Teachers recognizes that the creation of community schools must embody a common set of guiding principles, including a commitment to collaborative leadership and practice, expanded learning time and opportunities, integrated student supports, and active and community engagement, as evidenced by:

A. Community schools have a strong academic curriculum. The school and community must work together to ensure that students have a strong and rigorous curriculum that will further student success. The goal of academic success should inform all strategic partnership planning.

B. Community schools establish a set of coordinated and purposeful partnerships that integrate services for students, their families and the community, with the common goal of ensuring student success and building strong communities. Many schools offer after-school tutoring or a series of unconnected programs: These are not community schools. Their programs are too often unrelated to each other, disconnected from any academic mission or rigorous curriculum and lacking the kind of support built through partnerships that engender sustainability.

C. Community school partners may include a variety of providers and funders. They may be community based, regional or national organizations, and may have nonprofit, for-profit or faith-based status.

D. Community schools provide more than one type of service to students, parents and the community. These may include:

30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58

1. academic services, such as tutoring, community-based learning and other enrichment activities;
2. medical services, such as primary, vision, dental, wellness and nutritional services;
3. after-school recreational activities;
4. mental health services, such as counseling and psychiatry;
5. curricular tie-ins with local community employers and needs;
6. jobs and internships;
7. institutions of higher education, community colleges, English language skills and job development programs; and
8. a variety of social services.

E. Community schools are based on a comprehensive and strategic plan agreed to in writing (e.g., contracts, memoranda of agreement and memoranda of understanding) between the partner organization(s), including providers and funders, and the school. Written agreements are necessary for oversight of the school site(s) to avoid school governance and operations problems. Written agreements also provide a vehicle for planning and for creating scalable community school models with buy-in from all stakeholders.

WHEREAS, the Texas AFT believes all students have a right to learn and achieve academic success regardless of where, or under what circumstances, they live. Too often, children from disadvantaged areas, whether in urban centers or rural communities, lack the additional supports other children have at home and in their communities that promote learning; and

59 WHEREAS, research shows that access to healthcare, social services and  
60 extended and additional learning and recreational opportunities, as well as  
61 increased parent involvement, are critical to student success. We cannot  
62 ensure that all students learn without closing the services gap for  
63 disadvantaged students; and

64

65 WHEREAS, when community schools are carefully designed and built with  
66 input from the community, they are better able to accommodate the various  
67 services and activities they provide. Research finds that a well-designed,  
68 sustainable school environment supports academic goals and can  
69 significantly improve students' learning, productivity, health and overall well-  
70 being. Studies continue to show that student attendance is consistently  
71 better in sustainable, green schools; studies associate adequate ventilation,  
72 natural lighting and good acoustics with improved student performance.  
73 Students in sustainable community schools located in disadvantaged areas  
74 demonstrate real progress; and

75

76 WHEREAS, a community that is engaged in the school; promotes a school  
77 climate that is safe, supportive and respectful; and connects students to a  
78 broader learning community will help develop an informed and educated  
79 citizenry, strengthen family and community ties, and nurture democracy in  
80 the 21st century; and

81

82 WHEREAS, by forging strategic partnerships, community schools have the  
83 potential to strengthen a school's academic program, engage parents and  
84 meet the varied needs of students as well as communities. Community  
85 schools connect and educate all partners to the issues of school, community  
86 and family life; and

87

88 WHEREAS, existing community school models—both within in the state of  
89 Texas and nationwide—provide established solutions that demonstrate how  
90 schools and communities can connect to help all students learn and thrive.  
91 These models provide examples of how to:

92

- 93 • manage space and resources;
- 94 • build cross-sector coalitions, and have collaborative labor-management  
95 relationships;
- 96 • design new community schools, redesign existing schools and buildings  
97 and co-located spaces for community school use; and
- 98 • involve non-school personnel and experts; and
- 99 • leverage support from outside organizations, including government,  
100 private not-for-profit and philanthropic organizations:

101

102 **RESOLVED, that the Texas American Federation of Teachers:**

- 103 • **urge locals to partner with school districts, local government**  
104 **entities, political leaders, and labor and community leaders to**  
105 **transform the schools serving our students into community**  
106 **schools, to bring together, under one roof, the services and**  
107 **activities that our children and their families need;**
- 108 • **work with partner organizations and support affiliations with**  
109 **and coalitions of allies to solicit local needs from community**  
110 **members and to establish and promote community schools;**
- 111 • **support federal and state legislation and programs that fund**  
112 **community schools programs as part of a strategy to turn**  
113 **around struggling schools;**
- 114 • **assist states in developing enabling legislation and**  
115 **comprehensive strategies to institute community schools;**

- 116 • call for ongoing, high-quality research into community schools'  
117 best practices, staffing models, approaches to implementation  
118 and student outcomes such as student learning and other  
119 outcomes;
- 120 • ensure that community schools enhance academic standards;
- 121 • ensure that community schools will not be used to bypass  
122 contractual agreements, reduce standards for existing, normal  
123 operating school hours, lessen those standards during after-  
124 hours operations, displace existing services and/or staff or  
125 weaken existing crucial health and safety regulations; and
- 126 • call for high-quality, ongoing, embedded staff development in  
127 community schools.

128

129 *Submitted by Houston Federation of Teachers*

1 **RESOLUTION 5**

2 **RESOLUTION OPPOSING MERIT PAY AND PAY**  
3 **TIED TO HIGH-STAKES TESTING**  
4

5 WHEREAS, high-stakes testing does not accurately measure student  
6 achievement; and

7 WHEREAS, there is no evidence that future student achievement is improved  
8 by linking teachers’ merit pay to high-stakes testing; and

9 WHEREAS, testing-based merit pay can result in corruption:

10 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT will continue its policy of fighting**  
11 **merit pay linked to high-stakes testing; and**

12 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and its affiliates will work with allies to**  
13 **education parents, community leaders and the public about the**  
14 **limitations of high-stakes standardized tests and the**  
15 **inappropriateness of their use to make high-stakes decisions**  
16 **regarding students or educators, including educator pay.**

17  
18 *Submitted by Alliance AFT Dallas*

1 **RESOLUTION 6**

2 **SUPPORT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS**  
3 **IN SCHOOLS THAT RECEIVE PUBLIC FUNDS**  
4

5 WHEREAS, there is a crisis of criminalization in this current generation of our  
6 nation's youth, which has come to be known as the "school-to-prison  
7 pipeline," that begins with student suspensions, expulsions, push-outs,  
8 referrals to alternative institutions, and arrests in our public schools that  
9 increases and exacerbates our nation's tragedy of mass incarceration; and

10 WHEREAS, there are decades of research that demonstrate punitive and  
11 reactionary discipline measures heighten the incidence and severity of the  
12 behaviors they are designed to reduce in our public schools; and

13 WHEREAS, punitive approaches are not making our schools and communities  
14 any safer but instead discourage, demean, and criminalize our children and  
15 have resulted in an unacceptable and unnecessary number of suspensions,  
16 expulsions, push-outs, referrals to alternative institutions, and arrests; and

17 WHEREAS, these harsh disciplinary practices, also known as "zero  
18 tolerance," further result in the loss of valuable instruction time, cause  
19 students to dropout, and not only increase the risk of contact with law  
20 enforcement agencies and the juvenile court system, but ultimately help to  
21 swell the numbers of persons who are unemployed, in need of public  
22 welfare, and plagued by mental health issues; and

23 WHEREAS, in a learning environment where student behavior issues are not  
24 properly addressed, there exists a climate which is both unwholesome and  
25 unsafe for students and school staff which negatively impacts the academic  
26 performance of the school; and

27 WHEREAS, our public schools need to implement and develop disciplinary  
28 systems that work with our students and not against them, by transitioning  
29 to comprehensive restorative justice philosophy and practice in order to  
30 integrate social and emotional learning into the curriculum, incorporate the  
31 necessary wraparound services, create a safe and respectful environment for  
32 everyone in the school, and prepare our students to become productive  
33 citizens; and

34 WHEREAS, restorative justice philosophy and practice in schools teaches  
35 children to understand the impact of their behavior, take responsibility,  
36 repair the harm they have done and restore relationships; and

37 WHEREAS, in most cases so far, the move from zero tolerance to restorative  
38 justice has been a change in rhetoric only, without the necessary personnel,  
39 training and resources needed to fulfill the intentions and stated objectives  
40 of the program:

41 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and our locals will advocate that every**  
42 **school that receives public funds adopt the restorative justice**  
43 **philosophy and restorative justice practices and support systems,**  
44 **including but not limited to counseling, intervention, peace circles,**  
45 **peer juries, peer mediation, conflict resolution, restitution and**  
46 **community service; and**

47 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and our locals will advocate that all**  
48 **school administration, staff, and security personnel be trained in the**  
49 **basic philosophy and critical practices of restorative justice; and**

50 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and our locals will advocate that the**  
51 **students, parents, community members, legislators, and public be**  
52 **educated about the basic philosophy and critical practices of**  
53 **restorative justice; and**



54 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT and our locals will advocate for funds to**  
55 **place restorative justice coordinators/trainers and support staff in**  
56 **every school with the goal of promoting positive learning**  
57 **environments that foster meaningful student relationships to**  
58 **develop self-worth, cultivate emotional well-being, culturally**  
59 **relevant and culturally responsive curriculum, and help produce**  
60 **responsible citizens.**

61

62 *Submitted by: Education Austin*

# RESOLUTION 7

## UNION-LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

WHEREAS, high-quality professional development and learning is a valuable union-led activity that benefits our members and our students, and

WHEREAS, our union recognizes that successful professional development and learning programs starts with dedicated trainers, and

WHEREAS, the success of a professional development and learning program is dependent on the interest and participation of our leaders and members, and

WHEREAS, our union believes building relationships with the district and institutes of higher education provides sustainable support for our professional development programs, and

WHEREAS, our union wants to ensure maximum quality for participants, and understands the importance of dedicating resources to union-led professional development and learning programs, and

WHEREAS, our union desires to build and sustain a successful professional development and learning program across our state,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will support locals seeking to build and sustain a professional development and learning program to serve their members that includes a robust plan, professional development committee and a local site coordinator to lead the program, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will assist each local to systematically recruit and prepare effective trainers who exhibit a**

27 **number of essential characteristics, including effective teaching,**  
28 **communications and problem-solving skills, and**

29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will support locals to**  
30 **implement effective marketing and outreach strategies across**  
31 **various means of communications to generate awareness and buy-in**  
32 **of their professional development offerings. Incentives and support**  
33 **included as a part of an outreach strategy can help mobilize and**  
34 **engage members, fostering a commitment to engage in professional**  
35 **development, and**

36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Texas AFT will work with locals to**  
37 **reach out to districts and colleges to form partnerships with**  
38 **professional development and learning and to create a program that**  
39 **is tailored to the specific needs of their membership and the**  
40 **conditions in their district.**

41

42 *Submitted by McAllen AFT*



# ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS



JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

CONVENTION

AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE



1 **RESOLUTION 8**

2 **SUPPORTING A COST OF**  
3 **EDUCATION/ADEQUACY STUDY FOR**  
4 **TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
5

6 WHEREAS, the Texas Supreme Court has criticized the manner by which  
7 Texas funds its public schools but has chosen not to intercede on behalf of  
8 those children, leaving the task to the Texas Legislature; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature, while taking a good first step during the  
11 2019 Legislative Session to increase state funding for public schools,  
12 continues to provide less than what is needed to ensure quality education for  
13 all Texas children and fair pay and benefits for Texas educators, and  
14

15 WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature and the recent Texas Public School Finance  
16 Commission have each failed to propose or fund a study to determine what  
17 the actual costs are to fully fund public education in our state, and  
18

19 WHEREAS, in many other states, most recently in Michigan and Maryland,  
20 cost of education/adequacy studies have been conducted and have provided  
21 important empirical evidence for our union and allies to make the case to the  
22 public and to elected officials about the need to invest more in public  
23 schools; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature will meet again in 2021, where it will be  
26 able to consider the issue of school finance; and  
27

28 WHEREAS, Texas AFT has already convened an initial statewide stakeholder  
29 meeting of public school advocates, foundation leaders, experts in the field

30 of conducting cost of education/adequacy studies to begin the conversation  
31 about a Texas cost of education/school adequacy study; therefore, be it

32

33 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will work with allied organizations across**  
34 **Texas representing labor, business, school districts, civil rights,**  
35 **parents, foundations, and others organization and individuals**  
36 **interested in equitable and full funding for public education in Texas**  
37 **to build a coalition capable of conducting a cost of**  
38 **education/adequacy study to be performed for Texas to determine**  
39 **the amount of resources necessary for our school children to meet**  
40 **the ambitions academic and career goals of our state.**

41

42 *Submitted by Texas AFT President Louis Malfaro*



1 **RESOLUTION 9**

2 **RESOLUTION ON ASSISTING IMMIGRANT**  
3 **WORKERS TO BECOME CITIZENS**

4  
5 WHEREAS, there are 9 million aspiring citizens who contribute to our  
6 communities, our economy and our country-yet are effectively not covered  
7 by our fundamental labor laws and are denied essential rights in our society;

8 WHEREAS, the union movement recognizes the way we treat aspiring  
9 citizens reflects our commitment to democracy and the values that define  
10 us;

11 WHEREAS, encouraging union-led citizenship drives for permanent residents  
12 who are currently eligible to apply for citizenship will provide strong worker  
13 protections, expand and diversify the electorate, and help us build power to  
14 win the sweeping changes that working people expect and deserve;

15 WHEREAS, the Texas AFT and several of our local affiliates have partnered  
16 with the AFL-CIO and other allies to provide citizenship forums, and general  
17 assistance with the naturalization process;

18 WHEREAS, the Texas AFT and our locals will defend and support working  
19 families however we can, including through a robust union-led naturalization  
20 program.

21 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Texas AFT and our locals, in**  
22 **conjunction with the Texas AFL-CIO, will open up local offices and**  
23 **central labor council halls and urge other affiliate unions and their**  
24 **locals to open their halls for citizenship and workers' rights classes**  
25 **in partnership with allies or where appropriate, as a labor movement**  
26 **initiative.**

27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Texas AFT and our affiliates will, in  
28 **conjunction with the Texas AFL-CIO, identify key locals and mount**  
29 **citizenship drives, voter registration and get-out-to-vote efforts that**  
30 **will change the political environment for labor and enhance workers'**  
31 **ability to organize.**

32

33 *Submitted by Northside AFT*

# RESOLUTION 10

## OUR WORK IS POWERFUL WHEN WE ORGANIZE

1  
2  
3  
4  
5 WHEREAS, the Texas American Federation of Teachers (Texas AFT) is a  
6 union of professionals that champions fairness, democracy, economic  
7 opportunity and high-quality public education; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, our state federation and local affiliates have a strong and  
10 important relationship with our national union, the 1.6 million-member  
11 American Federation of Teachers; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, since 1983, Texas AFT and AFT has had a long working  
14 relationship, which has expanded our union's Associate Membership Program  
15 (AMP) providing new resources to engage public school employees to  
16 increase membership density and to develop new leaders; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, our union understands that the State of Texas is changing with  
19 an increase in population, demographic changes are being observed, and our  
20 state's political landscape offers new opportunities; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, we have celebrated many organizing successes in chartering new  
23 locals including three new locals, Edinburg AFT, Northside AFT, and PSJA AFT  
24 since the last Texas AFT convention; and  
25

26 WHEREAS, the importance of building our union's power on our journey to  
27 win collective bargaining in the State of Texas has never been more  
28 important; and  
29

30 WHEREAS, winning collective bargaining may be our union’s ultimate goal,  
31 but we also seek to build power and win policies that give employees a voice  
32 whether it be through elected consultation or another process that gives  
33 workers a seat at the table and to engage in the decision-making process;  
34 and

35  
36 WHEREAS, our ability to fight and win depends on the strength at the ballot  
37 box, and we must do more to organize public school employees to engage in  
38 political activities; and

39  
40 WHEREAS, our union has helped turn numerous seats held in the Texas  
41 Legislature to “pro-public education,” but still not enough support to fully  
42 advance a robust pro-public school agenda to secure adequate funding,  
43 improve working conditions, and change the balance of power:

44  
45 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT will intensify the organizing efforts**  
46 **underway in our locals, organizing committees, and throughout the**  
47 **State of Texas; and**

48  
49 **RESOLVED, that collectively Texas AFT, locals, organizing**  
50 **committees, and AMP will support this recommitment and to**  
51 **increase membership; and**

52  
53 **RESOLVED, that our union will continue to expand our Texas AFT**  
54 **Associate Membership Program (AMP) to increase members,**  
55 **cultivate new organizing committees, and continue to charter new**  
56 **locals; and**

57

58 **RESOLVED, that we will all seek to identify new leaders and develop**  
59 **our leadership structures and engage activists; and**

60

61 **RESOLVED, that together, our union will engage members and speak**  
62 **with them about the importance of building political power in the**  
63 **state and support efforts to increase voluntary member**  
64 **contributions to our Committee on Political Education (COPE); and**

65

66 **RESOLVED, that we will actively recruit and mobilize our members to**  
67 **be involved with campaigns at the local, state, and national levels;**  
68 **and**

69

70 **RESOLVED, that our union will involve our members and public**  
71 **school employees across the State of Texas in local issue advocacy**  
72 **campaigns, and**

73

74 **RESOLVED, that together, our union will unite all members to**  
75 **champion the voice of workers and the communities we serve**  
76 **because OUR WORK IS POWERFUL.**

77

78 *Submitted by Edinburg AFT*



28 WHEREAS, we do not act alone—our union is the vehicle for our activism and  
29 our actions. To have the greatest impact, our members need their local  
30 higher education unions:

31 **RESOLVED, that the activism and mobilization of our higher**  
32 **education members—college faculty, staff and adjunct instructors**  
33 **campaigning for fair compensation, fairness and equity on the job,**  
34 **bully-free working environments, student debt relief and affordable**  
35 **higher education for all; may carry forward the fight to make sure**  
36 **the values we share are reflected in public policies and higher**  
37 **education institutional policies; and**

38 **RESOLVED, that we will renew our commitment to higher education**  
39 **organizing and pledge to step up our efforts to build up our existing**  
40 **higher education local unions’ internal structures, strengthen our**  
41 **member engagement, and seek out new higher education organizing**  
42 **territories; and**

43 **RESOLVED, that, by increasing our organizing efforts for higher**  
44 **education workers, we will show one another—and the students and**  
45 **communities we serve—that we have the power to help our**  
46 **members build better lives for their families while securing the**  
47 **freedom to have a decent wage, a voice at work and clout in our**  
48 **politics; and**

49 **RESOLVED, that member engagement and solidarity are essential to**  
50 **building our power and exercising it through mobilization or at the**  
51 **ballot box—recognizing that neither members nor local affiliates can**  
52 **achieve their full potential acting alone, on their own; and**

53 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT must continue to play a central role**  
54 **to help all locals build strength through member engagement and**  
55 **expand their core group of activists so that we can continue to move**

56 **our ideas into action in our workplaces, in our communities, in the**  
57 **public policy arena and in electoral politics; and**

58 **RESOLVED, that we are committed to sustain the solidarity and**  
59 **power of our Texas AFT Higher Education Local affiliates so that**  
60 **through our union we will continue to accomplish together what**  
61 **none of us could do alone.**

62

63 *Submitted by AFT Lone Star College and Austin Community College AFT*



# WORKERS' RIGHTS



JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

CONVENTION

AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29

## **RESOLUTION 12**

### **STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY FOR ALL TEXAS SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

WHEREAS, all Americans deserve to attain retirement security and to live in dignity in their later years; and

WHEREAS, Social Security is the bedrock of the American retirement system, covering 96 percent of American workers; and

WHEREAS, Social Security is the most significant source of income for the majority of retirees over the age and 65 and provides more than half of the total income for over two-thirds of households comprised exclusively of those aged 65 and older and provides at least 90% of income for a third of this group; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of Texas public school employees work for school districts that do not participate in Social Security and therefore provide no access to Social Security benefits; and

WHEREAS, public school employees in Texas who work in non-Social Security districts are subject to unfair penalties on Social Security benefits they have earned through other employment including the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) which reduces the amount of their retirement or disability benefit and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) which reduces their Social Security spouse's or widow's or widower's benefits; and

30 WHEREAS, there are efforts currently underway by coalitions of unions  
31 and other progressive groups to strengthen Social Security so that the  
32 program continues to provide American workers with disability and  
33 retirement security;

34

35 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT will work with the American**  
36 **Federation of Teacher to amend the current Social Security law**  
37 **to remove the WEP and GPO provisions that unfairly reduce the**  
38 **Social Security benefits of Texas school employees and other**  
39 **public employees who have worked for non-Social Security**  
40 **employers; and**

41

42 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT will work with allies and with the**  
43 **Texas Legislature to explore avenues for including Texas school**  
44 **and other public employees in Social Security, so that our**  
45 **members can benefit from this national pension program and**  
46 **so that the program becomes stronger through the inclusion of**  
47 **more American workers.**

48

49 *Submitted by Texas AFT President Louis Malfaro*

# RESOLUTION 13

## TEXAS AFT MEMBERS WILL WORK TO PROTECT AND SECURE AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

WHEREAS, access to affordable healthcare is critical to every individual's quality of life; and

WHEREAS, any healthcare system must at a minimum provide a safety net of basic care for every person in every community regardless of race, socio-economic status, gender or sexual identity; and

WHEREAS, while clearly not perfect, the current federal healthcare framework of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid has provided millions of people with access to healthcare and the ability to get their most basic health needs met; and

WHEREAS, Texas American Federation of Teachers members believe that access to affordable healthcare must be maintained—that it is a key economic and humanistic issue of our time, and that the cost of healthcare should never prevent people from receiving the care they need; and

WHEREAS, because affordable healthcare is critical to the economic stability of all families and our nation as a whole, the AFT has consistently supported a system of coverage—be that the ACA or a public, single-payer option—that is accessible and reliable for all Americans in the same way that Medicare is for seniors; and

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump and his Health and Human Services Department have pledged to repeal the ACA and to end Medicare as we know it—pledges that put seniors at risk and threaten all Americans' healthcare security; and

28 WHEREAS, this approach to healthcare would destabilize the financial  
29 structure of our healthcare system, leave up to 30 million Americans without  
30 affordable access to care, increase costs to older Americans and once again  
31 leave people with pre-existing conditions without adequate coverage; and

32 WHEREAS, the healthcare policies supported by the Trump administration  
33 pose an existential threat to Texans' ability to receive the care that is  
34 essential to achieving a meaningful and secure life in 21st-century:

35 **RESOLVED, that the Texas American Federation of Teachers and its**  
36 **affiliates call for improving—not destabilizing and destroying—our**  
37 **healthcare safety net, including protecting and improving**  
38 **Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act; and**

39 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT and its affiliates will continue to work**  
40 **to secure a healthcare system that puts patients before profits**  
41 **and recognizes every single person's right to access quality,**  
42 **affordable healthcare; and**

43 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT supports Medicaid expansion in the**  
44 **state of Texas; and**

45 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT will educate and mobilize its**  
46 **members and our broader community to support access to**  
47 **affordable, quality healthcare.**

48

49 *Submitted by La Joya AFT*

1 **RESOLUTION 14**

2 **SUPPORT, RESPECT AND**  
3 **DIGNITY FOR SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS AND**  
4 **INCREASE THEIR PAY TO A LIVING WAGE**  
5

6 WHEREAS, nearly a quarter of the 65,000 members represented by the  
7 Texas American Federation of Teachers are classified as support  
8 professionals; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, the leadership and activism of this constituency of the Texas AFT  
11 has put our union at the forefront when it comes to developing strategies,  
12 programs and resources to effectively address issues that affect these  
13 members, including fighting off privatization and concerns over lack of  
14 quality professional development opportunity and bullying in the workplace.  
15 Support professionals are leading the charge on safety and health and the  
16 fight for a living wage; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, many school districts pay support professionals at or near the  
19 federal minimum wage, while actual costs of living have continued to rise;  
20 and  
21

22 WHEREAS, in the world's wealthiest country, millions of full-time workers  
23 continue to earn poverty-level wages, putting their children and themselves  
24 at a lifestyle risk for health and education concerns, including but not limited  
25 to, poor nutrition, unsafe or inadequate housing, lack of access to medical  
26 aid when needed, and challenges to children's learning abilities and therefore  
27 to their success in school; and  
28

29 WHEREAS, studies show that an increase in the minimum wage corresponds  
30 with an increase in jobs and has little or no negative effect on the  
31 employment of minimum wage workers, regardless of the strengths or  
32 weakness in the economy, and that an increase in the minimum wage could  
33 generate millions of dollars into the state in consumer spending, adding  
34 additional stimulus to the Texas economy; and

35  
36 WHEREAS, a national movement of workers is demanding \$15 per hour as a  
37 minimum wage; and

38  
39 WHEREAS, a living wage of \$15 per hour will result in lower turnover rates  
40 that will reduce the costs of recruitment, hiring and training and increase the  
41 quality and continuity of job performance;

42  
43 **RESOLVED, be it resolved that Texas AFT and all Texas AFT locals**  
44 **will redouble our efforts through continued practices, policies and**  
45 **actions to recognize the highly qualified status of support**  
46 **professionals and their many contributions that they make on a daily**  
47 **basis in their union and in their workplace; and**

48  
49 **RESOLVED, be it resolved that the goal of raising base pay for**  
50 **support professionals from their current wage to at least \$15 per**  
51 **hour, where full-time employment generates a living wage.**

52  
53 **RESOLVED, that Texas AFT recognizes the important work all**  
54 **support professionals do and pledges to support actions to improve**  
55 **their working conditions and pay.**

56  
57 *Submitted by Fort Bend AFT*





27 mid-February. Congress resumed efforts to reinstate the legislation by  
28 passing out of the House Judiciary Committee H.R. 1585, a bipartisan bill to  
29 reauthorize VAWA and adjust some aspects of the existing law, however, the  
30 U.S. Senate has failed to take up the bill;

31 **RESOLVED, that the Texas AFT will send a letter expressing support**  
32 **for the passage of the reauthorization of the Violence Against**  
33 **Women Act to both Texas U.S. Senators and to the appropriate**  
34 **media, and will work with the American Federation of Teachers to**  
35 **promote passage of this important piece of legislation; and**

36 **RESOLVES, that the Texas AFT and its affiliates will work with Texas**  
37 **AFT members in our locals to educate them about the important**  
38 **aspects of this law and about the resources available for educators**  
39 **who encounter domestic abuse and abuse of children.**

40

41 *Submitted by Corpus Christi AFT*





JUNE 7-9 // HOUSTON, TX

CONVENTION

AND **PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE**