



January
2021

ATF Action Agenda

2021 Legislative Session Is Here! Stay Alert! Stay Active!

The 2021 legislative session is the critical moment when we must move toward reopening school buildings and continuing American public education - not as it is today or as it has been in the past, but as it can and should be: the center of democracy, the foundation of a fair and just society, and the cornerstone in our community where every child can succeed. While the closing of school buildings during the pandemic affords us an opportunity to rethink the schooling we have been providing, it also limits what we might accomplish.

The 60-day legislative session opens on January 19th and closes March 20th. This year each legislator will be limited to 5 pieces of legislation, making our ideas for change that much more important and each piece of pending legislation, and its sponsor, that much more precious.

It is imperative that we stay alert and stay active during the session. Stay tuned for more information from your union about how we advocate for bills that could impact your students and your career. [Get started by finding your legislators here.](#)

Be in the know about what we are advocating for. Read our [ATF 2021 Legislative Agenda: Post-Pandemic Public Education: Equity & Excellence, A positive call to action](#) or read about it in the [November/December 2020 edition of the Teachers' Voice.](#)

Let's seize this opportunity to build a more equitable, student-focused education system that helps each child to succeed and achieve. In the short term, we can accomplish this by making systemic changes that will mitigate the pandemic's impact on learning and interrupt the punitive deficit-based practices of the last 20 years. In the long term, these changes will ensure that we are able to prepare students to be caring, competent, critical thinkers, and fully informed, engaged, contributing members of society.

[Read the full article and updates here.](#)

"The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress. Out of its bold struggles, economic and social reform gave birth to unemployment insurance, old age pensions, government relief for the destitute, and ... new wage levels."-
MLK

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day!

No school January 18th!



New Hope for a New Year from AFT President Randi Weingarten ([paraphrased](#))

Reopening schools is essential for our children's well-being and education, and to reopen the economy, but it must be done safely and responsibly. Here's a blueprint for how we can do this:

- **Get the virus under control** through testing, contact tracing, targeted closures, supporting health care workers, and vaccines on a national level.
- **Put health safeguards in schools** including vaccines, PPE and proper ventilation.
- **Make distance learning as effective and engaging as possible.** Educators need planning time, staff to support students' individual needs, and an end of simultaneous online and in-person learning.
- **Wrap services around students.** Families need food programs, guidance counselors, health and mental health services, and vaccine distribution.
- **Assessments should support learning.** Project-based and performance-based assessments should replace standardized testing.
- **Provide instructional supports to advance achievement and close learning gaps.** We must fund community schools, smaller classes, tutors, extra learning time, enriched after-school/summer school, social and emotional learning and culturally responsive practices.
- **Ensure reasonable accommodations.** School staff who have or live with family members who have pre-existing conditions must have the opportunity to work remotely.
- **Build trust through transparency and engagement.** Educators must be involved in the decision-making process. New York City has a labor-management council to problem solve and provide school staff with voice and agency.

Enhanced Vaccine Registration On State Website

The NM Department of Health (NMDOH) announced that the state's vaccination website - [vaccinenm.org](#) - now enables users to complete comprehensive personal profiles which include personal medical conditions and employment information. The profiles will allow the state to notify New Mexicans when vaccine doses become available in their area.

Since the website's release a few weeks ago, over 10% of New Mexicans have signed up. State officials believe it is the only system of its kind in the country and follows a simple process:

- Users submit basic contact information, such as employment category and medical conditions.
- Users are then contacted to fill out additional demographic & insurance information.
- Users will receive a notification to schedule a vaccination and will fill out a medical questionnaire about their current health.

The state will launch a vaccine call center to provide support for those who wish to register by phone or ask questions about the process.

There is a national and state movement to expedite educator vaccines. We want your opinion. Your union will be sending out a survey soon to ask for your feelings on this matter.

Change in Dossier Submission Date!

The **deadline for submitting a dossier** to NMPED this Spring is **May 15th**. The window reopens in July. The former deadline of March 30th is still listed in some places on the PED's website, but that is not accurate.

[Read about your union's Dossier support here.](#)

A New Mentor Program for E&RSEs

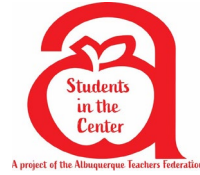
Attention Counselors, Social Workers, Nurses, Interpreters, Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Audiologists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Athletic Trainers, School Psychologists, Educational Diagnosticians, and Transition Specialists/Rehab Counselors- you now have a mentorship program ready for the second semester! [Read all of the information on our website.](#)

- New to your profession and need a mentor?
- Experienced practitioners, are you ready to be a mentor?
- Assigned mentors will earn \$1,000 per semester just like in the teachers' mentor program.
- For more info email: mentorprogram@aps.edu

ATF Students in the Center

The ATF Students in the Center Cadre (SIC) would like to invite you to a series of conversations that will give you an opportunity to share ideas and learn from your peers. Please join us to discuss a range of topics that intersects SEL with topics such as restorative practices, educator self-care, community building, equity, and trauma. Bring your successes and challenges so that we can all learn from each other as we embark on another uncharted semester of learning.

[Read a short description of each course.](#) See the dates and times for all of the conversations in the "Calendar of Events" below. [Sign up for one or all of the conversations here.](#)



AFT Calls For State Waivers To Standardized Testing

American Federation of Teachers, our national union, prepared a letter to the Biden-Harris transition team urging the incoming administration to revisit the decision by the Trump/DeVos Dept. of Ed. to move forward with the assessment and accountability requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) during this 2020-2021 school year.

AFT urges the new administration to consider waivers for states and, most importantly, to tie assessment to learning.

Don't Let This Year Define Your Career

Missing meaningful conversations with colleagues? Looking for new ways to engage your students (and yourself)? Want some new tools for your toolbox?

Join us for an uplifting, solution-oriented, teacher led, teacher focused, community building virtual gathering. We'll have a little PD, a little networking, and a lot of new ideas. Come to one or come to all. Each session will be stand-alone.

See January dates and times in the "Calendar of Events" below. See all dates and [RSVP/Sign up here!](#)

For more info, email Ree Chacon at chacon_am@aps.edu

AFT on Dr. Miguel Cardona's Nomination as U.S. Sec. of Ed.

AFT President Randi Weingarten said: "Miguel Cardona is not just a proud product of public schools—he's made strengthening public education and fighting for equity his life's work. With his experience as a student, fourth-grade teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and commissioner in Connecticut, Dr. Cardona—a former AFT member—will transform the Education Department to help students thrive, a reversal of the DeVos disaster of the last four years." [Be sure to read her full statement.](#)

Calendar of Events

*** All events and classes will be held online unless otherwise noted.*

DATE	EVENT	TIME
1/12	ATF Unified COPE Committee	4:30-5:30pm
1/14	Professional Development Dossier Overview	4:30-7:00pm
1/14	Don't Let This Year Define Your Career	4:00-5:00pm
1/19	SIC- Polishing the Diamond: Integrating Restorative Practices into our Schools	4:00-6:00pm
1/19	SIC- Developing Self-Awareness: Did you schedule time to breathe today?	4:30-6:00pm
1/20	SIC- "You saw that, where?" Social Support and Community Building	4:00-6:00pm
1/21	SIC- Framing Trauma in the Virtual Classroom: Declutter the Mind	4:30-6:30pm
1/21	SIC- Is every voice being heard? Examining oppression, power, and privilege through intersectionality	4:30-6:30pm
1/23	ATF/AFT-NM Union Leadership Program	9:00am-4:00pm
1/26	SIC- Framing Trauma in the Virtual Classroom: Declutter the Mind	4:30-6:30pm
1/28	Don't Let This Year Define Your Career	4:00-5:00pm
2/2	Fed Rep Council	4:15-6:30pm
2/3	SIC- "You saw that, where?" Social Support and Community Building	4:00-6:00pm
2/4	SIC- Is every voice being heard? Examining oppression, power, and privilege through intersectionality	4:30-6:30pm

SETT Lead Teacher Positions Open

The Special Education Teacher Training Program (SETT) is a post-baccalaureate alternative teacher training pathway for individuals interested in becoming special education teachers at Albuquerque Public Schools. It was co-created by your union! We need experienced Lead Teachers who will:

- Share your expertise with a new special education teacher;
- Help train a new special education teacher through co-teaching and modeling;
- Receive a \$3,000 stipend for your service.

Interested? Contact SETTpathway@gmail.com

ATF – Your Professional, Progressive Union

Stand in solidarity with your friends & colleagues! Join your Union Today!!

Ask your Fed Rep to sign you up!

or

Join online at: <https://atfunion.org/join/>

or

Call the ATF office: (505)262-2657