



WHAT IT MEANS FOR DEMOCRACY TO WIN



Ellen Bernstein
ATF President

I don't think I realized how worried I was about the midterm election until it was over. Worried that the progress we have made funding public education in our state would stagnate or go backward. Worried for our democracy. And worried that if democracy lost in the midterms, the future of our public schools would be in jeopardy.

We were at a precipice, and it felt like a crazy place to be. Current voters, many of whom were very young (thank you, Gen Z!) made a clear choice between leaders who seed hate and political divisiveness and ones who stand for a collective future, civility, and problem solving.

"I don't think older generations realize how fundamentally angry we are. We're angry with policies and practices that have set up our lives to be a struggle from day one. We were born into a world where the environment is crumbling, democracy is dying, bigotry is becoming the norm, and we're angry about it." - Maddie Billet, 20, a sophomore at George Washington University, Philadelphia Inquirer, Nov. 15, 2022

I was outwardly optimistic and inwardly terrified. I thought the specter cast by our past president would motivate

voters to stand up for our freedoms. But who knew such a divisive figure would help us restore democracy by pushing us to the point where we were actually voting for its very existence?

This is a great moment for our country, and for the kids we teach. We must not forget what brought us here, and we must not take democracy for granted as we move forward.

That's the key: fighting forward. We are delighted that so many friends and allies were re-elected or will join the state legislature for the first time. But we must not be satisfied with a legislature that simply preserves and maintains current gains. We need to keep pushing, keep advancing and keep succeeding. We need MORE support for students, schools, and educators. The outcome of this election gives us an opportunity to make those improvements.

We are on the right path. New Mexico is addressing the educator shortage by raising pay and providing support to new educators who want to join our profession. We have a governor and legislature who have set their sights on improving students' educational experiences and who know the success of this depends on attracting and retaining a workforce of educators who feel supported and respected.

I also want the elected leaders to have vision for what could be, and what public school must be for our democracy to thrive: education that supports deep student learning and conceptual understanding that equips students to be able to transfer their learning to new situations.

New Mexicans and citizens across the nation voted for democracy. Public schooling is the foundation that will propel us forward and underscore the trust and hope people put into their votes. We want this year's legislative outcomes to include the support and opportunity for us to rethink "typical" schooling and achieve a more equitable, student-focused education system. We want what Randi Weingarten calls "time, tools, and trust" to pursue bold initiatives that will help all our kids thrive. When our policies and practices are well-funded and infused with respect and support for our professionalism, educator shortages will be a thing of the past.

The midterms gave us that opportunity. Democracy won. Now, let's focus on building a world-class education system for all students in our public schools.

FRIENDS OF PUBLIC ED AND LABOR SWEEP 2022 MIDTERMS!



New Mexican voters flocked to the polls in record high numbers for the 2022 midterm election. ATF- and AFT NM-endorsed candidates won up and down the ballot. But the real winners are the state's educators and the students and families we serve. The outcome was a resounding victory and a mandate to continue the work of creating a world-class public education system for all New Mexicans. Thank you for your participation and activism. Grassroots action is how we win elections. No one does it better than union members!

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales will continue to guide the state's executive branch, supported by public officials who have demonstrated great leadership for years.

Our Congressional delegation could not be stronger advocates for working people and our public schools. Congratulations to U.S. Representatives Melanie Stansbury, Teresa Leger Fernandez, and Gabe Vasquez.

A GIGANTIC congratulations to all the ATF Unified COPE's endorsed candidates, many of whom are current or retired ATF members. We look forward to the continued advocacy we've come to rely on from NM Representatives/ATF Members G. Andrés Romero, Joy Garratt, Liz Thomson, Christine Trujillo, Debbie Sariñana, Natalie Figueroa, and Miguel Garcia.

Congratulations to our endorsed allies who we can count on to support public school educators and public education in the State Legislature: Representatives Javier Martinez (just elected Speaker of the House), Gail Chasey, Janelle Anyanonu, Meredith Dixon, Eleanor Chavez, Marian Matthews, Pamela Herndon, Art De la Cruz, Patricia Roybal Caballero, Day Hochman-Vigil, Antonio "Moe" Maestas, and Cynthia Borrego. We have our fingers crossed that Rep. Charlotte Little will prevail in a re-count of her district.

Many thanks to our COPE Chair Sara Attleson (right). Her political acumen keeps our union on a path of progress. Thank you to the ATF Unified COPE Committee members who made wise decisions and recommendations on which candidates to endorse: James Macklin (ATF), April Baca (AFCP), Anne Pierce-Jones (AFT NM Retirees), and John Comstock (AFT NM Retirees). Thank you to representatives at our Fed Rep Council who voted unanimously to accept the committee's endorsements. Finally, we want to shout out all members who contributed to COPE, made phone calls, and canvassed to make our goals reality!



Now, it's on to Santa Fe in January because...

HERE COMES THE 60-DAY SESSION!

Between mid-January and mid-March, 70 representatives and 42 senators will create or change laws that affect our classrooms and decide how much funding flows to our schools. Most of the money required to operate our schools and fund our salaries is allocated yearly by the NM Legislature and agreed to (or not) by our governor.

When Gov. Lujan Grisham was elected, she promised to support and fund public education. Although that commitment was disrupted by the pandemic, funding has increased. But the 70 representatives, 42 senators and 1 governor can't stop the momentum now. We have years of cuts and flat funding to overcome and surpass before we can create the world-class public education system we all want and our students deserve.



The Buzz: The Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) is working with the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC). They are engaging in conversations about spending priorities in the coming 2023 Legislative Session. Here is what they are talking about so far:

Raises: We don't have a sense of how much they are thinking about yet. We do know that a 1% raise state-wide requires \$32 million in new funding. Our union's goals are to win the flexibility to address the compression that impacts the most experienced educators, continue to progress in compensation, and

ensure a higher percentage increase for our classified colleagues who are paid so poorly.

Year after year, our classified colleagues have received a smaller percentage raise which results in a paltry wage by any standard. Although raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour was a step in the right direction, many of these educators who we and our students rely on every day continue to live below the poverty line. We need to right this wrong.

Extended learning: From the conversations being held by the LESC and LFC it is very clear that extended learning time is not going away. It is the belief of some in the legislature that additional time in class will help students succeed. The research on this subject is varied.

Proponents of extended learning time want to increase the number of required instructional hours in elementary and secondary to 1140. The current requirement is 990 at elementary and 1080 in secondary. They are proposing an allocation of \$202 million for this. We have heard there will be flexibility about whether the time is added as additional days, extra time on the day, or both. Working for local decision-making on how this time is scheduled will be a priority for our union.

The ATF believes that increased time with students alone will not improve instruction and outcomes. As we've said on many occasions, educators need more adult time. That means time to plan better lessons, to collaborate with our peers, to engage in professional development, and to complete the ever-expanding clerical tasks required of us (or have them removed).

The work of participants in the APS/ATF Professional Day Pilot confirms that more adult time leads to greater equity in the classroom and more time for educators to build student-centered, culturally responsive learning environments. Adequate adult time has also been linked to greater retention of educators.

Local funding for local priorities: The Albuquerque Teachers Federation (ATF) calls on the state legislature to fully fund the State Equalization Guarantee (SEG). This is the funding formula that sends state tax money from Santa Fe to local school districts. When the SEG is adequately funded it leads to local autonomy in spending priorities. That increases your union's power at the bargaining table which would mean that we could address long-standing priorities like fixing and fully funding differentials for those who perform the extra work that keep our schools functioning (leadership positions, coaching pay, music and art programs, after school clubs, extra duties, etc.). We must have local money for local needs this year.

Attraction to the profession: ATF President Dr. Ellen Bernstein worked with our national union (American Federation of Teachers) this past year to author a study titled "Here Today Gone Tomorrow." You can access the report [here](#). It outlines retention measures that can be taken on a local, state, and national level to keep qualified, experienced educators in our classrooms. Our state is ahead of the curve on these measures. That can be seen by the reduction of the number of open jobs this year.

The governor's administration and the state legislature are on the right track in their efforts to recruit and attract new educators to our public schools. The cornerstone of these efforts has been the creation and recurring funding of teacher residency programs championed by the ATF and ushered through the legislature by ATF retiree Representative Debra Sariñana. Programs like the Albuquerque Teacher Residency Program (ATRP) and the Special Education Teacher Training program (SETT) have led to a reduction in the number of open classroom positions in our district, and similar programs are alleviating teacher shortages across the state.

The committees recommended \$20 million in recurring spending to expand these residency programs. They also call for \$2 million to establish a counseling residency to attract school counselors.

Other notable topics of conversation: There are a great many proposals being discussed. These caught our attention as they mirror initiatives your union has pushed for years:

- \$11.5 million to support current Community Schools and expand programs to new schools.
- A recurring appropriation of \$30 million to support career and technical education programs and work- based learning.
- \$34 million to provide universal access to physical education and Fine Arts programs in elementary.
- Increasing the at-risk multiplier to fund responses to the Martinez-Yazzie lawsuit that would bring new investment of \$53-\$70 million.
- Modernizing high school graduation requirements so that we can educate the whole child while increasing our graduation and career readiness rates. The devil will be in the details on any legislation addressing this issue.



The AFT, along with their affiliates and researchers, have developed resources to help school systems succeed in educating all students. Colorin Colorado is the nation's leading bilingual website for serving educators and parents of English language learners (ELLs)

Visit www.ColorinColorado.org Today!

As educator unionists we must be engaged, vigilant, and active during the coming legislative session. It will be essential for you to stay tuned in to your union's informational emails and calls for action. Through solidarity and advocacy, we can make many of these goals that seemed unreachable only five years ago reality.

NO ONE DOES TEACHER RESIDENCIES BETTER THAN NEW MEXICO!

Since 2018 ATF President Dr. Ellen Bernstein has consistently advocated for paid teacher residencies as one of the most effective tools to ensure teachers are well-prepared and supported and NM can buck nationwide teacher shortages.

Now programs built in collaboration among ATF, APS, and both UNM and CNM have created amazing opportunities for people who have a degree, are looking for a career change, and want to become a teacher.

Tell your friends and loved ones, now is the time to go into teaching in New Mexico.

In our programs:

- Residents co-teach alongside a master teacher for a full academic year.
- Residents concurrently take Master's level education courses leading to Level One Licensure.
- Residents receive a stipend during their year of residency and are guaranteed a teaching position in Albuquerque Public Schools upon completion.



The Albuquerque Teacher Residency Program (ATRP) is a post-baccalaureate alternative teacher training pathway for New Mexico residents interested in: K-8; Math & Science; Spec. Ed and Bilingual.

Applications are being accepted from October 17, 2022-February 15, 2023. For more information, email gradlicensure@unm.edu or contact Dr. Marjori Krebs, Director of Residencies, at mkrebs@unm.edu.

Zoom Information Sessions: Tuesday, December 6, 4:00-5:00 p.m.; Tuesday, January 17, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Visit the [COEHS DPTR](http://COEHS.DPTR) website to apply to be a Teacher Resident.



The Special Education Teacher Training (SETT) Program is a post-baccalaureate alternative teacher training pathway for New Mexico residents interested in becoming special education teachers at Albuquerque Public Schools.

Application for 2023-24 Term is Open
 Class Begins: Fall 2023
 Best consideration: January 17, 2023
 Early Acceptance: February 15, 2023
 Application closing date: April 15, 2023

Online Information Session: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 6 p.m.

[Click here to learn more](#)

CAN WE FOCUS ON BOTH SEL AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES?

According to the Committee for Children, the answer is yes. Restorative practices is a process through which SEL skills are further learned and refined, and it provides a safe physical and emotional environment for doing so. You can read the blog by [clicking here](#).

Here is some of what you can learn from this blog:

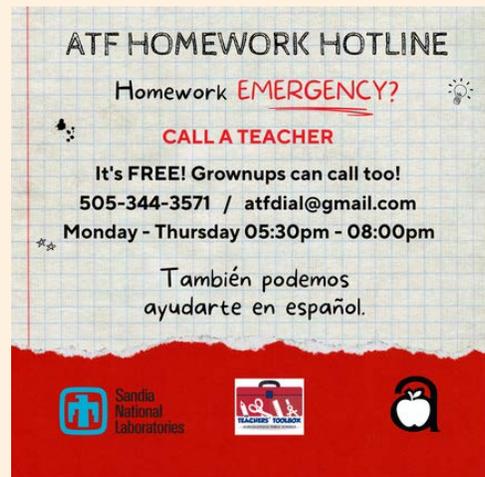
- Both SEL and restorative practices are positive approaches to student behavior in that they promote positive environments and give students direct opportunities to develop and use positive skills.
- Both can help to boost the same outcomes, such as improved school climate, student-student and student-teacher relationships, reduced conflicts, and decreases in exclusionary discipline practices such as suspensions.
- When students have skills to listen, show empathy, disagree respectfully, establish positive relationships, understand and manage emotions, and handle challenging situations effectively, they can participate in the restorative practice process with more ease and confidence.
- Restorative practices provide students and adults with a positive community, process, and opportunity to put their social and emotional knowledge and learning into practice. Social-emotional skills provide the foundation needed to successfully navigate the restorative process and all that comes with it.

E&RSE CERTS AND CREDS ADVOCACY

Years ago, ATF and APS engaged in conversations on how to effectively attract and retain educators such as social workers, nurses, counselors, and various therapist groups such as OTs, PTs and SLPs. ATF refers to these employee groups as Essential and Related Service Educators (E&RSE).

As a result of these conversations, ATF was able to successfully bargain the current certifications and credentials program. This program is jointly run and administered by ATF and APS with input from E&RSE Fed Reps, ATF staff, and APS Human Resources.

Each role group works to build a list of preapproved certifications and credentials that are beneficial to their work with students. Educators submit an application with proof that they qualify to be paid a differential. The submissions are reviewed by role group Fed Reps, ATF, and HR. The differential pays \$1,000 per approved certification or credential. E&RSEs may submit up to 10 of these differentials per school year! Add that to reimbursements for licensures, professional association dues, and CEUs, and it's easy to see the advantages of working in a unionized district!



Your union's commitment to negotiating great benefits to attract and retain staff in APS has issued in E&RSEs earning thousands of dollars more each year, while incentivizing professional development. This is the direct result of having a union that is tireless in its advocacy for Albuquerque educators. The more of us who are united, the better benefits we can win. If you're not yet a member of your union, what's holding you back from joining? Together, we can achieve great things!

DIFFERENTIATED PD FOR PRINCIPALS

APS has three firms currently coaching principals: Baiza, SREB (Southern Regional Education Board), and Univ. of Washington CEL (Center for Educational Leadership). They are a part of the differentiated Professional Development for principals.

We have received reports from Middle School teachers whose principals are engaged in this coaching from SREB that:

- Principals are asking a lot from the teachers (lesson plans, artifacts, etc.).
- At some schools, classroom observations are scheduled during I-ready testing, and some schools are actually being asked to change their schedules for the firms' visits.
- The principal PD has added more work to teachers' plates.

So far, admin has not provided staff with "Why are they here?" or "What is expected later down the road?" information. Any addition to the workloads of our overworked staff is concerning. Principal PD should not create extra work for employees.

Although it might be legitimate for educators to provide lesson plans, etc. if an observation takes administrators into an individual classroom, authentic artifacts and authentic lesson plans are fine and should not have to be specially created or rewritten for SREB visits. These observations are about your principal, not you.

If you have concerns about being asked to perform additional tasks because of these observations and visits, please email act@atfunion.org with the subject "Principal PD."

PAID PD LEAVE FOR YOU

One of the benefits in your union contract is the guarantee that you must be granted a day of PAID professional leave per year if requested. It is yours for the asking for any "conference, workshop, meeting, seminar, or other activity related to the educator's assignment, where the educator will be responsible to pay for the training."

Beyond that, your administration may grant additional days of professional development leave, and you should encourage them to take advantage of that discretion to allow for development that will benefit you, your school and the district.

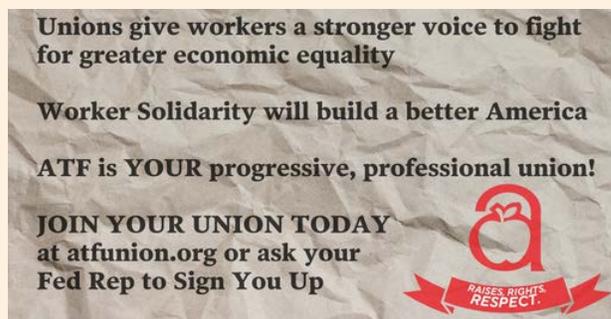
If that first professional leave day is requested and denied, contact your Federation Representative or ATF staff representative immediately. If you seek and are denied additional leave, feel free to contact your ATF representative to discuss possible strategies to see if that additional leave can be obtained. If you are told that administration does not have money in the budget for such leave, you can explain that there does not need to be money budgeted as this money comes from the district. It will simply go on your timesheet in much the same way any other sub day would be recorded.

CAPSTONE PROJECTS APPROVED AS ELECTIVE!

For the past few years, your union has advocated for the inclusion of Capstone Projects to meet graduation requirements in APS. Recently, the APS Curriculum Board approved Capstone Projects as electives. This type of mastery learning helps engage students as they

demonstrate deep learning in ways that interest them. Capstone Projects are student-centered and support students' social, emotional, cognitive, moral and identity development. They reach far beyond mere testing or term, paper-based grading to encourage students to use 21st century skills and media to produce individualized proof of mastery while affording students opportunities for collaboration with peers and school adults.

They have been touted to better prepare students for the type of project-based assignments they will encounter in college and the world of work. Your union is committed to advancing your professionalism to bolster student success. The ATF and APS agreed to pilot Capstone Projects in 2021. Now, that work is coming to fruition. You can read the Capstone Project Guidelines on the "Answers & Docs" page at atfunion.org or scan [click here](#).



ATF EVENT CALENDAR

Date	Event	Time	Cost
Thurs., 12/1	Breathe for Change (online)	4:30-5:30pm	\$5 members; \$10 nonmembers
Sat., 12/3	National Board Renewal Class	8:30am-12:00pm	\$75 members; \$100 nonmembers
Thurs., 12/15	Breathe for Change (online)	4:30-5:30pm	\$5 members; \$10 nonmembers
Sat., 12/17	ATF/AFT NM Union Leadership Program	9:00am-4:00pm	Applicants only
12/21/22-1/3/23	Winter Break- Traditional Calendar	No classes	Rest & Relaxation
12/19/22-1/2/23	Winter Break- ELTP Calendar	No classes	Rest & Relaxation
Tues. 1/3	PD Day for ELTP sites	2/3 of day site-based PD and 1/3 of day for teacher preparation	Welcome back, staff!
Wed., 1/4	Students Return- ELTP Calendar	All Day	Welcome back, students!
Wed., 1/4	PD for Traditional Calendar Sites	2/3 of day site-based PD and 1/3 of day for teacher preparation.	Welcome back, staff!
Thurs., 1/5	Students Return- Traditional Calendar	All Day	Welcome back, students!
Thurs., 1/5	Breathe for Change (online)	4:30-5:30pm	\$5 members; \$10 nonmembers
Tues., 1/17	Opening Day of the Legislature	Noon	Your pay and working conditions



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