



Aldine-AFT
Local 6345 / AFL-CIO

local Voice

November 2010 / www.aldineaft6345.org

Events & Activities

Texas Safe Schools Act Workshop

November 10
Aldine-AFT Local Office
4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Federation Committee Meetings

Teacher & PSRP Committees
November 11
Aldine-AFT local office
4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Building Rep. & Ambassador Legislative Kickoff / Holiday Meeting

December 2
Jimmy G's Cajun Seafood Restaurant
307 N. Sam Houston Pkwy. E
5:00 to 7:30 p.m.

General Membership Holiday Event & Membership Meeting

December 9
Greens Point Mall Public Meeting Room
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Offices Closed

December 17 to January 3, 2011
Winter Break

Visit our "Calendar" section at our
local web site for more events.



Sign Our Petition

Help us partner with the district to provide free quality professional development programs to all Aldine ISD employees. Give employees input into what professional development is offered, and allow our federation to train employees on district property. Sign our petition online at www.aldineaft6345.org.

We Are Not Waiting for Superman

Documentary doesn't tell the real story

It's hard not to be moved by "Waiting for 'Superman.'" It's an emotional film about families seeking good schools for their children. But good storytelling is no substitute for an honest and accurate look at how we can really improve our public schools so they offer all children access to a great education.

The film's central themes—that all public school teachers are bad, that all charter schools are good and that teachers' unions are to blame for failing schools—are incomplete and inaccurate, and they do a disservice to the millions of good teachers in our schools who work their hearts out every day. The film relies on a few highly sensational and isolated examples in an attempt to paint all public school teachers as bad. Had the filmmaker visited some good public schools, he would have found that no good teacher supports tolerating bad teachers who are failing in the classroom.

But "Waiting for 'Superman'" doesn't show many of the great public schools across the country where AFT members work. And it makes no mention of many productive labor-management efforts that have turned the collective bargaining process into a powerful tool to improve schools. And it ignores the work of local unions across the nation, supported by the AFT Innovation Fund, to take the lead in improving teaching and learning.

We hope the film motivates people to support real solutions to help all children get the education they deserve—not just a lucky few. The AFT advocates for (1) developing great teachers through revamping preparatory programs for teachers, and overhauling teacher development and evaluation programs; (2) creating robust curriculum; (3) creating the conditions that promote learning for all kids; and (4) ensuring shared responsibility and mutual accountability that hold everyone responsible for fixing our schools, not just teachers.

Through productive labor-management efforts, we have made progress and continue to work for all children, all public schools and all communities. Check out some examples of our work visit www.aft.org.

**Not waiting
for Superman**



Teachers Take Responsibility for Professional Development

Aldine-AFT members kicked off their campaign, “With us, not to us,” at the beginning of the school year to partner with the school district to provide better professional development. The union is proposing to provide free workshops to assist both teachers and professional employees on district property



Aldine ISD educators are pictured taking part in the September 9th Classroom Management workshop. Attendees received new tools to assist with classroom activities and CPE credit.

with the approval of district personnel. The union is also proposing that employees would have input in the types of professional development they are seeking, and then create workshops to meet these demands.

“Members often tell us that they sit through the same workshop time after time, and really don’t get too much from it,” said Michael Dawson, Aldine-AFT Secretary-Treasurer. “I think we have a real opportunity to collaborate with the district to lower budget costs and be proactive in giving our educators the tools they need to succeed.”

On September 9, our union sponsored a classroom management workshop providing insight into effective management techniques and gave educators valuable CPE credit. Ana Pomar, Texas AFT Education Issues Director, led the two-hour workshop where participants shared their experiences in the classroom and gained new ideas to use in their everyday activities.

In addition to classroom management, Aldine-AFT recently hosted a workshop on October 27 titled *PDAS: Know Your Rights & Exceed the Ratings* where participants received updated information regarding the Professional Development Appraisal System. Attendees also discussed how the system is intended to be used to provide transparent-documented opportunities to improve and grow as professionals. However, there are times where the rights of educators are violated, and the union’s intent is to take a proactive approach to ensure that the appraisal process remains fair.

The local union will be hosting another workshop on November 10 focusing on classroom discipline. The Texas Safe Schools Act workshop provides tools and information on how to remove chronically disruptive or threatening students from the classroom. This law was passed in 1995 thanks to the hard work of AFT members across the state, and its provisions have been upheld by numerous courts. Texas AFT is the leading advocate for empowering teachers to be able to deal directly with classroom discipline issues, and our union will be working diligently in the upcoming legislative session to protect these key provisions.

“Our educators need the support of their administrators each and every day,” said Dawson. “We cannot afford to be on separate sides fighting each other. Instead, we need to be working together to educate our schoolchildren. Safe schools, strong classrooms, and fairness is what we are striving to achieve. Our union invites all employees to participate in future activities as we are here to help.”

Aldine-AFT has not yet announced its spring workshop schedule. With recent developments in school bullying, this topic will surely be front and center following the winter holiday break. Local union leaders have already met to discuss how to best involve community leaders and district personnel to collaborate on this issue.

For more information regarding Aldine-AFT events including social and professional opportunities, visit our web site at www.aldineaft6345.org.

AFT Political Interaction

Prior to the November general elections, Aldine-AFT local leaders and members met with multiple candidates for political office. Aldine-AFT members are pictured at the Harris County AFL-CIO office with then Lieutenant Governor candidate, Linda Chavez-Thompson. Thompson is the former Executive Vice President of the national AFL-CIO and was endorsed by Texas AFT.



Ambassadors Take Action

This year, Aldine-AFT launched its new Ambassador Program. This initiative allows members to become more involved with the union by promoting our activities and initiatives in the community. Each ambassador is asked to share information with their church, civic organization or community group. By completing outreach activities, ambassadors earn prizes such as cash gift cards, apparel, and airline tickets. To sign up, please call our local office at 281/847-3050.

“It’s not about the prizes,” said Antonio Corrales, Ambassador from Goodman Elementary. “I am proud to assist my union because sharing our message with the community is very important. I challenge all members to do this because we need to stand up for each other.”

Salute to Our Current Ambassadors

Linda Billnoski (Campus); Antonio Corrales (Goodman Elementary); Lesley Dickens (Bussey Elementary); Rose Ewing (Hill Intermediate); Kathleen Gunter (Grantham Elementary); Candis Houston (Hoffman MS); Marna Johnson (Raymond Elementary); Delisa Jones (Orange Grove Elementary); Paula Lee (A.W. Jones EC/PK); Amanda Logan (Transportation); Mary Loreda (Transportation); Olivia Randall (Orange Grove Elementary); Melissa Slezak (Lane School)

President’s Update

New Legislative Session, Familiar Challenges, Opportunities for Activism

By: Carmen Mayorga

Let’s be honest. There is a lot for our lawmakers to do when the general legislative session begins in January 2011. As members of this union, I am calling upon each of you to stay informed and be ready to pick up the phone or send an email to your elected officials because so many issues that affect our everyday lives are at stake.



Carmen Mayorga
Aldine-AFT President

It has been said that our state will be facing up to a \$21 billion-dollar budget deficit. We will have a clearer picture of the budget situation as we get closer to January, but one thing is for certain, funding for our public schools will be a hot topic. In the last legislative session, statewide teacher pay raises were provided by the federal economic stimulus bill passed by Congress. This time there will be no federal stimulus, and we will be debating on how to fill the gap left by these fading federal dollars and a broken school-funding system.

Bad ideas on how to fix the funding crisis for our schools are already being tossed around. Some lawmakers want to eliminate the 22:1 student to teacher ratio for grades K-4. Some want to eliminate or weaken our rights to a duty-free lunch and planning time. Others want to tie our evaluations strictly to student test scores or make it easier to fire teachers without any due process.

We have a responsibility to our profession and to our students. It is our time to speak out for what is right and advocate for our solutions to these tough issues. This is our opportunity to not only call upon our lawmakers to be real leaders, but for each member to become an activist to defend and protect our profession.

I invite you to learn more about our legislative agenda. Visit our local web site at www.aldineaft6345.org to download our brochure. Be sure to sign up to receive our daily legislative update (*Hotline*-be sure to use your personal email address), and ask your co-workers to join you in this fight. There is power in numbers, and come January, it will be time to demonstrate our power.

Finally, on Monday, March 14, the first day of spring break, our local will be taking buses to Austin for our statewide Lobby Day event. We need all school employees to go, be seen, and be heard. More information about this event is forthcoming. Lobby Day is an important day to join thousands of educators in Austin and take action on these issues that matter most to us and our schoolchildren.

HOLIDAY EVENT **Membership Meeting**

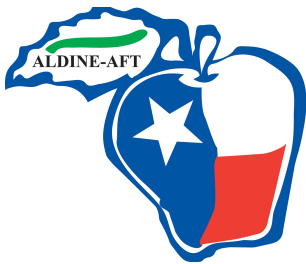
All members of Aldine-AFT are invited to attend our annual holiday event and general membership meeting.

Tuesday, December 9
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Greenspoint Mall
Community Room
12300 North Freeway

Food & Beverages Provided

Receive updated information about your AFT+ member benefits presented by Barbara Lightheart, Texas AFT Benefits Representative.

Call 281/847-3050 to RSVP.



Aldine-AFT

Local 6345 ★ AFL-CIO

521 N. Sam Houston Pkwy. E, Suite 110 ★ Houston, TX 77060
T: 281/847-3050 ★ F: 281/847-1097 ★ www.aldineaft6345.org

1. YOUR INFORMATION Please print clearly

New Member / Update Profile

NAME: _____ DOB: _____ SSN: _____
(Nombre) (Fecha de Nacimiento) (Seguro Social)

PERSONAL EMAIL: _____
(Correo Electronico)

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
(Telefono de Casa) (Telefono Celular)

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ APT: _____
(Direccion) (Número de Apartamento)

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
(Ciudad) (Estado) (Codigo)

JOB TITLE: _____
(Titulo de Trabajo)

WORK SITE / CAMPUS NAME: _____
(Lugar de Trabajo)

CIVIC GROUPS & NAME OF YOUR CHURCH (optional): _____
(Organizaciones Cívicas / Afiliaciones Religiosas) (Opcional)

2. MEMBERSHIP DUES / CONTRIBUTIONS

YES! I would like to join Aldine-AFT. Please select the dues amount below, and enter this amount in the line titled, **"DUES AMOUNT."** If you decline to contribute to COPE, please subtract fifty cents (\$0.50) from the per check dues amount

Teachers & Certified Employees

\$25.50 (20-checks) \$21.25 (24-checks)

Employees making less than \$25,000

\$17.46 (20-checks) \$14.55 (24-checks)

Employees making less than \$10,000

\$13.44 (20-checks) \$11.20 (24-checks)

Aldine-AFT COPE Fund

The Aldine-AFT Committee on Political Education (COPE) collects voluntary contributions from members and uses these funds to support political candidates (\$1.00 per month). Contributing is not a condition of membership and members have a right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal or loss of membership status, rights, or benefits. You may decline to contribute to Aldine-AFT COPE by initialing below:

"I decline to contribute to Aldine-AFT COPE, and I understand that this will not affect my membership status or rights."

Initial _____

3. PAYROLL DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize the Aldine I.S.D. to deduct from my salary my dues obligations to the Aldine-American Federation of Teachers. These deductions should begin following my signing of this authorization form and continue for this school year and future years, including any increase in dues that may occur and until written notification is given by me to the district revoking this authorization.

PRINT NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

DUES AMOUNT: _____ **DATE:** _____ **SSN:** _____

Return this application to the Aldine-AFT office. If using payroll deduction, completed applications may be faxed to 281/847-1097. Learn more online at www.aldineaft6345.org.

OFFICE USE ONLY: Received on _____ / Received by _____ / Entered on _____