

RESOLUTION 44

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Through adoption of this resolution, the AFL-CIO joins with organizations across the country in support of public education and our continued commitment to the highest quality public education for all students.

Public education is the foundation of our 21st century democracy. Our public schools are where our students come to be educated in the fullest sense of the word, as citizens of this great country. We strive every day to make every public school a place where we prepare the nation's young people to contribute to our society, economy and citizenry.

Ninety percent of American children attend public schools. We call on local, state and federal lawmakers to prioritize support for strengthening our nation's public schools and empowering local education leaders to implement, manage and lead school districts in partnership with educators, parents, and other local education stakeholders and learning communities. This support would also provide for such necessities as counseling, extra/co-curricular activities and mental health supports that are critical to help students engage in learning.

We support and value inclusive and safe, high-quality public schools, where children learn to think critically, problem solve and build relationships. We support an environment where all students can succeed beginning in the earliest years, regardless of their zip code, the color of their skin, native language, gender/gender identity, immigration status, religion, or social standing.

We promote advancing equity and excellence in public education, and implementing continuous improvement and evidence-based practices. Every child has the right to an education that helps them reach their full potential, and to attend schools that offer a high-quality educational experience.

We support stable, equitable, predictable and adequate funding for great public schools for every student in America, so that students have inviting classrooms, as well as well-prepared and supported educators. These educators include teachers, paraprofessionals and principals who provide a well-rounded and complete curriculum and create joy in learning. Our school buildings should have class sizes small enough to allow one-on-one attention, and have access to support services such as health care, nutrition, and after-school programs for students who need them.

We believe that public tax dollars should only support public schools that are publicly governed and accountable to parents, educators and communities. In no way should local, state or federal funding be taken away from public schools and given to private schools that are unaccountable to the public.

We reiterate our love for public education and pride in our public schools. We will continue to promote the promise and purpose of public education, to elevate the great things happening every day in our public schools, and to engage communities about strategies that help students succeed. We affirm our commitment to fight for resources and against policies that would undermine these values.