

AFT Executive Council Resolution

Teacher Centers and Federal Policy

- WHEREAS, federally-funded teacher centers have helped teachers and other school personnel broaden and improve their instructional skills and contributed to increased collaboration among higher education and public school faculties and staff, and
- WHEREAS, teacher centers appear to be a contributing factor to improvement in student achievement in schools served by the centers, and
- WHEREAS, despite the education community's support of the teacher center concept as an effective inservice mechanism, the Reagan Administration favors consolidation of this federal initiative into block grants and a budget rescission of 25 percent, a course of action likely to choke centers through competition with other educational priorities at the state level and with each other, and
- WHEREAS, of the current 99 federally-funded teacher centers, 60 have completed their three-year funding cycle and will expire in FY 81, and
- WHEREAS, greatly reduced funding and new legal requirements that at least one teacher center exist in each state threaten a large number of these centers with extinction just prior to development of the capability to institutionalize, and
- WHEREAS, these same centers threatened with extinction are flagship centers, serving as models for the nation, and
- WHEREAS, abandoning these centers would mean abandoning a three-year investment in a federal initiative proven workable and effective,
- RESOLVED, that the federal government should support improvement of school personnel skills by expanding its commitment, financially and otherwise, to spreading the teacher center concept, and
- RESOLVED, that teacher centers should not be included in block grant consolidation where they are likely to be eclipsed at the state level by under-funded programs of direct aid and services to students, and
- RESOLVED, that funding procedures be adjusted to preserve centers whose three-year cycle has now expired and who are recompeting for limited funds, where quality and cost-effectiveness in serving large numbers of teachers have been demonstrated, and
- RESOLVED, that in accordance with lessons of experience, teacher center projects being funded for the first time, those never having been grant recipients, should be modestly funded with planning/start-up monies, and

RESOLVED, that all existing centers, including the 60 whose federal funding cycle is expiring, be allowed under the circumstances of demonstrable commitment, progress and merit to continue their activities with federal support in order that they may be assured assimilation in the institutional structure, and

RESOLVED, that in today's economy, a total of at least five years' federal funding is required to guarantee successful establishment of the teacher center concept through institutionalization. (1981)

3. RESOLUTION ON TEACHER CENTERS

WHEREAS, teachers have long recognized that teacher preparation and inservice education need to be more closely related to classroom realities, and

WHEREAS, teaching is a profession that can be perfected only through constant sharing, beginning, ideally, with an internship program for new teachers, and

WHEREAS, the framework for the sharing of new curricular approaches and of teaching strategies must be determined by teachers themselves if inservice programs are to be truly useful, and

WHEREAS, new federal legislation authorizing the creation of teacher centers provides for centers to be run by policy boards composed of a majority of teachers, and

WHEREAS, the voice of teachers on such boards is best reflected through democratically elected teacher organizations;

RESOLVED, that in all activities related to the planning, establishment, and operation of federally-funded teacher centers, local school boards and institutions of higher education must deal with the elected collective bargaining agent or organization representing teachers, and

RESOLVED, that teacher representatives to the policy boards that run centers be named by the elected collective bargaining agent or organization representing teachers, and

RESOLVED, that teachers serving on policy boards and participating in organized in-service activities sponsored by teacher centers be provided with released time so that they may take full advantage of the services offered by the centers, and

RESOLVED, that every effort be made to work cooperatively with institutions of higher education in developing centers and in administering their programs, and

RESOLVED, that center programs be made available to all educational personnel who wish to make use of them including paraprofessionals, guidance counselors, curriculum specialists, and teachers of every level and specialty, and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers urge Congress to fully fund the teacher center legislation at its highest authorized level. (1977)

14. **MAINSTREAMING**

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers supports the mainstreaming process as a part of the general Lifelong Learning program for all children, and

WHEREAS, legislation in various states has made it mandatory that handicapped children shall have the same educational rights as all other children, and

WHEREAS, these state laws and court decisions have resulted in massive mainstreaming without due consideration for the individual needs of students, parents, teachers, and the school communities involved, and

WHEREAS; this trend aided by federal funds will increase on all levels, regional, state and local;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers reaffirms its advocacy view of the principle of mainstreaming and takes the following position:

1. That regular and special education teachers are the backbone of any facet of the mainstreaming program and must share equally in its planning and implementation through its representative teacher organization, and
2. That every area of mainstreaming shall provide a favorable learning setting for the handicapped student as well as all other students when such students are educationally involved, and
3. That there be adequate preparation for regular and special education teachers, pedagogical and nonpedagogical personnel in these mainstreaming roles which must be on a voluntary basis with protection of their license and job retention rights in the area of special education, and
4. That appropriate instructional supplies and materials with adequate special facilities in conjunction with resource, supportive pupil personnel services be provided for the teachers and the students, and
5. That adequate additional funding for a full program be "earmarked" for mainstreaming and that such funds be used exclusively for that purpose with public trimester reporting and the accountability for funds so used, and
6. That educational, sound reductions be made in class size, with up to but no more than two handicapped students in a regular class when such type of class situation is involved, scheduling and planning of alternative variations of the mainstreaming design to accommodate the shifting demands that mainstreaming creates within the collective bargaining agreement, and
7. That teacher and non-teacher preparation, in-service or otherwise, be under the aegis of working teachers in the area via teacher centers, teacher corps, public training institutions, etc., and

8. That state and local education agencies be accountable for delivering needed services, and

9. That residential programs, diagnostic and research programs, home and hospital instructional programs, and the self-contained class are all vital parts of the Mainstreaming process and must be incorporated and given the proper foci deserved, and

10. That early identification and a sound prevention program coupled with modern technological devices are reductive factors in the need for the numbers of students who will require special education services. (1976)

15. **ENDORSEMENT OF TV PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers has long been concerned with the quality of education, and

WHEREAS, this concern should include the area of public media that most affects education, namely television;

RESOLVED, that the AFT Executive Council endorse those programs (specials or otherwise) that are in concurrence with our concern for quality education on television, and

RESOLVED, that this endorsement shall appear on the endorsement or credit section of the program endorsed. (1976)

16. **COMPETENCY BASED TEACHER EDUCATION**

WHEREAS, there has been insufficient quantity/quality of Competency Based Teacher Education (CBTE) research and field testing, and consideration of the potentially pervasive effect CBTE may have on the total education system (elementary, secondary, and higher education) in the U.S.A., and the individual states, and

WHEREAS, we wholeheartedly believe that further extensive/intensive research and field testing of CBTE and other alternate approaches to teacher education should be effected prior to implementing CBTE programs as mandated by the State Education Departments to determine the relationship of performance to long-term effects on pupils, to adequately consider the implications for staff development and to provide sufficient lead time for professional discussion;

RESOLVED, that AFT demand that CBTE activity be suspended until such time as sufficient funding is provided by the various state departments to compensate properly the required participation in the mandated consortia. (1976)

63. TEACHER TRAINING

WHEREAS, the preparation of teachers is fundamental in order to provide quality education for all children, and

WHEREAS, education in urban areas needs teachers with special abilities and training, and

WHEREAS, the selection and training of such teachers has been left exclusively in the hands of the colleges and universities, and

WHEREAS, the teacher union movement must assume its share of this responsibility;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers urge its locals to initiate dialogue on the subject of teacher education and teacher training with the colleges and universities that provide student teaching in their own school districts, and

RESOLVED, that contract negotiations at the local level include safeguards and direction so that universities and colleges will provide proper training for student teachers, and

RESOLVED, that sponsoring teachers assigned by the district to give such training be chosen for their ability to relate well and work effectively with children and teachers in training, and

RESOLVED, that contract negotiations include a reasonable remuneration and time for the sponsoring teacher to work with the student teacher. (Executive Council, 1969)

44.1. ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

WHEREAS, written examinations for the purpose of qualifying beginning teachers are useful to test literacy and a fundamental knowledge of subject matter and educational principles, and

WHEREAS, these examinations must be field tested to assure that they reflect both the content areas and pedagogical knowledge necessary for effective teaching;

RESOLVED, that teachers, through their union have significant involvement in test review and selection, and

RESOLVED, that AFT will oppose the use of examinations for decisions related to retention salary, or tenure, and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers supports the use of an examination to qualify new teachers as part of a process which includes a full teacher education degree program and which tests the level of literacy, knowledge of subject matter, and pedagogy. (1979)

12. FUNDING FOR TEACHER TRAINING

WHEREAS, the Congress has provided funds for teacher centers, and

WHEREAS, the combination of decreasing birth rates and budget cuts has resulted in staff reductions in school districts throughout the nation, and

WHEREAS, bilingual and special education are among the few areas where there are expanding job opportunities, and

WHEREAS, experienced and highly trained teachers have been laid off, while inexperienced recent college graduates have been hired;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers and its affiliated locals strongly support the inclusion of teacher training components in the areas of bilingual and special education in teacher center proposals, and

RESOLVED, that we urge the American Federation of Teachers to support legislation which would establish opportunities for the retraining of in-service teachers. (1977)

21. TEACHER INTERNS

WHEREAS, the Government of the United States has seen fit to establish a National Teacher Corps; and

WHEREAS, the National Teacher Corps will employ teaching interns; and

WHEREAS, Teaching Interns will be subject to dismissal with one week's notice; and

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers seeks to maintain protection of all members of the teaching profession; and

WHEREAS, Teaching Interns, because of their temporary status, are most in need of union protection; and

WHEREAS, the interests of the American Federation of Teachers can best be maintained where union experience is obtained at the beginning of the teaching career;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers shall actively seek to recruit said teaching interns;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers alter its governing laws to allow teaching interns to take an active part in the democratic functions of the American Federation of Teachers. (1966)

WHEREAS, private and proprietary child development and day care enterprises are engaged in a crucial battle with the local public school districts over who should control the education of preschool children, and

WHEREAS, alternatives, options and vouchers have become code words in the battle to withhold early childhood education, preschool and child development programs from the local public school districts;

RESOLVED, there should be free public school universal education for preschool children which would include child care and development services for all children, and it should be controlled by the public schools, and

RESOLVED, that the following "phase-in" measures be taken to achieve these ends:

1. Alternatives, options and vouchers for preschool will be opposed as an infringement upon the citizen's right to a free public education.
2. All funds for Head Start program will be channeled through and administered by the local public school districts.
3. If a new education department is established by the federal government, all preschool and child development and child care programs will be included.
4. AFT will lobby Congress, the legislature, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to achieve these goals. (1978)

90. CREDENTIALING FOR CHILDREN'S CENTER AND EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

WHEREAS, the importance of educating young children has been well established (see Bloom, Hess, Paiget, et al), and

WHEREAS, it is likewise well known that a 4-year college education plus a fifth year of postgraduate work in early childhood education makes a person a better teacher than someone with less education and training than this (see Seefeldt, Prescott, et al);

RESOLVED, that the AFT oppose any attempts to reduce the minimum qualifications for a children's center and early childhood teacher to a Child Development Associate "credential or some similar on-the-job training," and

RESOLVED, that AFT support and introduce legislation to require the same credentialing standards for children's center and early childhood teachers as for elementary and secondary teachers. (1978)

84. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, there is a nationwide need for universally available child development services, and WHEREAS, centers for the education of pre-school through 2nd grade children in the 50 states are administered under various auspices, have widely disparate standards, and are frequently merely custodial where they exist at all, and WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers has always supported high quality standards in the education of children and working conditions of teachers, and WHEREAS, such centers should in all 50 states be administered by the State Departments of Education and/or locally by public school districts, similar to the Children's Centers in California and the Early Childhood Pre-School Centers in New York City;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers support the concept of education of children under public school auspices with the following quality components:

1. uniformly high standards and coordination with existing public school education,
 2. fully licensed, trained paraprofessionals, and adequate ancillary personnel,
 3. educationally desirable ratio of children to teachers,
 4. safe and healthful building and environment with adequate play space,
 5. family education programs and a high degree of parent involvement,
 6. available to children of all parents, whether working, non-working, or student,
 7. access to a full range of health nutritional, guidance and social services;
- Furthermore, that the American Federation of Teachers urge all state federations and locals to support legislation to mandate these centers for children under public school auspices, and to negotiate such centers in their contracts. (1971)

The name Educare has been replaced by Lifelong Learning

85. LIFELONG LEARNING: AN OVERVIEW

In this period of economic crisis Americans can and must look to the public school, as they have always done, for a way out of poverty and joblessness. Investment in education bears a fruitful return:

- Educated citizens make a greater financial contribution to the public economy. They earn more; they pay more taxes.
- Educated citizens consume fewer public services such as welfare, medicaid, unemployment insurance.

Educated citizens make a greater contribution to our quality of life and to our country's well-being.

Yet, instead of spending on education, instead of making a sound investment in the future, governments at every level are cutting back school budgets. The inability of the schools to maintain quality programs results in immeasurable harm to our young people—and, in turn, weakens the fibre of our society.

Truancy is increasing.

Dropouts are increasing.

School violence and delinquency are increasing.

In addition, the general economic recession and the schools' unmet needs create further problems:

Increasing numbers of young men and women enter the job market without required skills, and join the ranks of the unemployed.

Growing unemployment increases the numbers of children who come from disadvantaged homes.

The special needs of disadvantaged youngsters cannot be met by schools whose programs are increasingly cut back...

Thus the vicious cycle works itself out. Further, fiscal "austerity" actually saves no money. In fact, it costs more, for if government does not invest in jobs and education, it must spend much more—on welfare, unemployment insurance, prisons. For every one million people out of work the federal government loses \$16 billion in revenue. There are further revenue losses to state and local governments.

The nation must change—now—its course toward the neglect of human needs, toward increasing unemployment and poverty. AFT proposes, as one essential step toward bringing our economy back to health—a major investment in education from infancy through adulthood—Lifelong Learning.

Right now:

- Six million children are in need of early childhood education;
- There are approximately 16 million working mothers, many of whom would need early childhood education and/or day care services for their children;
- Eight million unemployed adults need skills, retraining, and countless more need and want education for a better, more rewarding life;
- Thousands of school age children are failing because classes are too large and teachers can't provide individualized instruction—yet there are twice as many candidates for teaching than there are open positions;
- Thousands of high school graduates are deprived of higher education because they can't afford it, and because there aren't enough seats to go around.

We propose to meet these needs by a program of:

- Universal early childhood education and child care, within the public schools—to meet the

from providing day care under Head Start. They should continue to be excluded in any new early childhood and day care programs.

To meet America's need for a high quality early childhood education and child care program, the AFT calls upon the Congress to enact legislation that includes the following elements:

1. Achievement as rapidly as possible of the goal of free high-quality comprehensive early child care services for all children who need them. Since the program will necessarily require a period of time to get fully underway, gradually increased funds should be provided toward earliest achievement of this goal.
2. Coordination by the public schools as prime sponsor of a range of programs, including health, nutrition, counseling and other necessary support services and child care in a variety of settings including family and group day care homes.
3. Insistence that all services must meet federal requirements and standards as well as all local school and facility codes and laws, and that all construction, renovation and repair undertaken under the program must conform to the prevailing wage standards of the Davis-Bacon Act.
4. Denying profit-making operators eligibility to receive federal funds.
5. Provision for effective parent involvement in these programs, since they are programs parents voluntarily choose.
6. Provision for proper certification and licensing of personnel and for training, retraining and in-service training of professional and paraprofessional staff.
7. Provision for full protection of the job rights and employment conditions of workers in child care programs.

We believe that high quality early childhood education and day care can help us begin to solve a number of our pressing social problems: it can reduce under-achievement; it can provide health and institutional care for those who otherwise might not have it; it can bring parents closer to the schools; it can stimulate school integration by providing quality programs at earlier ages. Such a program of education for the very young will benefit all of our citizens at every age. (1975)

87. LIFELONG LEARNING II: A SECOND CHANCE FOR ADULT CITIZENS

Our nation's adult citizens are in great need of educational opportunities.

- Millions of unemployed need training and retraining.

- Millions who dropped out of high school or college in their youths are now ready for a second chance.
- Millions of workers seek the opportunity to change fields, or to advance themselves in their present jobs.
- There is a growing requirement for affirmative action programs in many of our industries, including education. Career ladder-type programs for women and minority group workers presently segregated in low paying, "dead end" jobs can meet that need.
- Earlier retirement and increased leisure time have created a need and a demand for educational experiences that improve the quality of life.
- Senior citizens want and need programs to enrich their lives, to enable them to use their minds and talents instead of wasting away their older years.
- Prisoners, long-term hospitalized persons, as well as other institutionalized individuals, could make a whole different life for themselves if education were made available to them.
- And thousands upon thousands of young adults seeking post-secondary education are deprived of it by rising tuition costs. For every \$100 increase in tuition, there is a corresponding decrease in enrollments of between 2 and 3 percent.
- The public school system and our accredited higher education institutions are uniquely suited to meet these needs. They meet high quality standards. They have the space, the qualified personnel, the know-how, the ability and experience to work with industry and with the public sector in coordinating programs.

AFT proposes, therefore, a comprehensive program of adult education which would include the following elements:

1. Tuition costs at higher education institutions must be reduced.
2. Publicly supported grants, worker sabbaticals, and no-interest loans should be made available to every citizen who wants to resume or continue an education. We support a GI-bill type of program for all those who have not had the opportunity to pursue their education. Such a program would reduce unemployment, increase availability of post-secondary education, and reduce welfare payments. Furthermore, it is non-inflationary. It pays for itself. There is no reason to believe that society would not enjoy the same long-range payoff for a universal GI bill as it did for its predecessor 30 years ago.
3. Open Admissions programs, with sufficient funding and personnel to provide needed remediation and individual attention, should be made possible at all our public higher education institutions.

3 EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

4. Adequate funding for comprehensive, well-planned and well-developed adult education programs in our public schools and by our public schools for those citizens who require non-school based or other diverse programs.

5. Career ladder affirmative action programs like the paraprofessional program in New York City, to enable those of our citizens who have been denied opportunity in the past to advance themselves through education. (1975)

+ 88. LIFELONG LEARNING III: TEACHER INTERNSHIP

Teachers, unlike other professionals in our society, go immediately from a purely theoretical academic background in a college or university to their initial teaching positions without any significant on-the-job training.

There are now no true intern programs, only "pseudo-programs," few of which require previous preparation in teaching. Those which do require prior preparation include only conventional courses plus student teaching.

The result of the traditional approach to pre-service education is that the problems of the beginning teacher are overwhelming. The early years of teaching are frequently the most turbulent, frustrating, and painful ones. New teachers entering the classroom are confronted with staggering difficulties in immediately taking over full responsibilities, without proper preparation, and usually without support. In an elementary school, the teacher is responsible for 30 or more children all day for the entire year. In the secondary school, the teacher may face as many as 150 students in five different classes each day all year long. These are the same assignments expected of an experienced teacher. Coupled with the pressures of extra-curricular assignments, young teachers begin their careers drastically undertrained and terribly overburdened.

The result is that the teaching profession has an inordinately high dropout rate. An estimated 10 percent of the nation's trained personnel leave teaching each year, feeling that they have failed. Now that the teacher shortage is over, we have a unique opportunity to utilize available teachers and teacher candidates to develop a much-needed new plan for entrance into the profession and for the improvement of teacher training. The American Federation of Teachers calls for the development of a genuine internship, one that would occur in real life teaching situations, similar to those in other professions.

No teacher should become permanently certified or be given full charge of a classroom unless and until a program of internship has been completed.

Specifically, beginning teachers should go through a period of up to three years where they do not have full responsibility for a classroom. Over that period of time they should have the opportunity to work with experienced teachers who would demonstrate various teaching styles and methodologies, exposing the interns to different curricular approaches and providing them with continuous feedback. Other activities in which interns should be engaged are observations at all levels, attendance at school board meetings, working with other school personnel such as guidance counselors and social workers, and participation in curriculum development. The internship program, involving cooperation with colleges and universities, would also enable experienced teachers to work along with researchers and other colleagues in higher education in important needed research in teacher effectiveness.

Further, we support the positions that:

- The internship period should be preceded by a well-defined, systematic program of undergraduate training in the knowledge and skills of teaching.
- The regular teacher with whom the intern works must be given sufficient time and support to work with those under his or her supervision.
- College and university programs also should be concerned with the preparation of supervisory personnel and experienced classroom teachers who work with interns.
- Teacher centers should be established which would serve research needs as well as the needs of teachers on the development of their teaching skills and of experienced teachers in their continuous in-service growth.
- Under no circumstances would interns replace regular teachers.
- The salaries of interns would be negotiated by the local teacher union.
- An initial preparatory certificate would be granted to admit the intern for a probationary period of two years. At the conclusion of this period, permanent certification would be granted to qualified teachers.

This kind of meaningful teacher internship program is vitally needed to improve teacher training, and ultimately to improve instruction in our nation's classrooms. (1975)

x 89. FREE UNIVERSAL EDUCATION FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

WHEREAS, "Preschool" education has been proven to be cost effective: it has lowered incidences of grade failures, it lowers the incidence of referrals to special education classes, and it increases one's earning potential after high school (see Lazar, Weikhart), and