



The Advocate

Texas Can Do Better: Thoughts on the 2011 Texas Legislative Session

Few, indeed, are the bright spots one can find from the 2011 Legislative Session in Austin. Men and women we elected to lead us through tough times turned the misery of a recession economy into excuses for an ideological crusade against education and other social services that are absolutely essential to keeping Texas competitive in a global economy.

Like many states around the country, Texas began this year under the specter of a severe budget shortfall. Unlike other states, however, our deficit was not strictly the result of economic hard times. An unwise restructuring of the state's taxation system in 2006, pushed by Governor Rick Perry, reduced state revenue intake dramatically. At the time State Comptroller Republican Carole Keaton Rylander warned that the restructuring would result in a "structural deficit" which, as it turns out, amounts to around \$10 billion dollars per biennium. The shortfall had little effect until this session largely because Texas accepted large amounts of federal stimulus spending even as Governor Perry railed against federal involvement in state matters.

In this session the proverbial chickens came home to roost. Throughout the session, Perry, backed by Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst (R-Houston) and House Speaker Joe Straus (R-San Antonio), adamantly refused to address the issue of the structural deficit which guarantees that budget crises will continue for years to come. They also refused to tap into the state's "rainy day fund" which was set aside to help in times of financial crisis.

Instead, they and their followers embarked on a breathtaking program of

budget slashing, focusing the bulk of their attention on social services and education. When all was said and done, 4 billion dollars in state support of education was cut, dropping Texas, according to estimates, from 37th among the states in per student spending to 44th. These cuts will result in the layoff of approximately 40,000 teachers state wide plus an estimated 30,000 other lost jobs in the community as collateral damage. An additional cut of 1.4 billion dollars in state grants translates into a 100% cut in state support for full day pre-K, a 100% cut in science lab grants, a 92% cut in the Student Success Initiative (for students at high risk of failing state exams), and other cuts. State contributions to employee retirement (this includes us) were cut from 6.644% of payroll this year to 6% next year. Apparently, all this cutting and slashing is not a real crisis since it doesn't qualify for "rainy day funds." I'm sure all of us are trying to understand this form of reasoning, but to little avail. Put simply, we don't get it.

Original budget plans called for the permanent elimination of "formula funding" for education whereby enrollment growth in a school district automatically triggers additional funds. Senator Dan Patrick (R-Houston), a primary champion of this proposal, praised the plan as "a true cut in an entitlement." He added, "The legislature in the past enacted laws that guaranteed X dollars to education. Moving forward, education needs to be linked to a realistic number that ties it with the economy [rather than student enrollment]. . . . This is the new normal."

Other legislation that passed makes it easier to furlough school employees,

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decreases the number of days before the end of the school year that schools must notify teachers of nonrenewal of contract from 45 days to 10 days, and eliminates the state “salary floor” below which school and state employee salaries cannot fall.

Community colleges were not forgotten in the overall carnage of budget cuts. At the end of the day state support for instructional costs in community colleges was cut by about 10.5%. This cut is on top of an approximately 7.5% cut in previous years.

These and other draconian measures I don’t have enough space to cover were all crafted in an atmosphere that Texas AFT Government Relations Director Eric Hartman described as “mean and ugly.” Teachers and other public workers were demonized. The voices of moderate and progressive legislators from both political parties were marginalized. Public education, the bedrock of American democracy, was brushed aside as an “entitlement,” conservative code among Dan Patrick’s listeners for wasteful government programs for the lazy and undeserving. Is this truly how we value Texas’ young people?

In the midst of all this, the good news (such as it is) is that things could have been worse.

This year’s assault on education brought out a broad coalition of everyday people willing to stand up and be heard. Examples include Allen Weeks, founder of Save Texas Schools, and the 9000 ordinary Texans who attended their rally at the capitol on March 12. Also included are the 4000 teachers and other school workers who fanned out to meet with legislative offices across the capitol on March 14 for AFT Lobby Day and the 5500 who participated in electronic town hall meetings sponsored by Texas AFT on June 6.



Other heroes include a dedicated cadre of lobbyists, including Eric Hartman, representing Texas AFT, and other pro-education organizations who worked through the session to influence the course of legislation and encourage friendly legislators to stand strong for Texas’ students. Here at Lone Star College, thanks are owed to Chancellor Carpenter and our administrators, staff, and faculty who astutely saw the writing on the wall and worked together on cost-saving measures that will prevent layoffs and harmful cuts to students. Cheers to our local group for looking after their own; other neighboring colleges were not so fortunate.

Special accolades should go to those courageous legislators from both parties who stood up to the ideologues on behalf of Texas students. Examples include Rep. Diane Patrick (R-Arlington, no relation to Dan Patrick) and Rep. Scott Hochberg (D-Houston) who successfully introduced legislation to restore formula funding in future biennia, thwarting the extreme vision of a permanent “new normal.” Another example is Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin) who tried valiantly but unsuccessfully to persuade the majority that, if the Rainy Day Fund increased in value, at least the increase could be used on public schools. Yet another example is Rep. Larry Gonzalez (R-Round Rock) who negotiated a “13th check” this year to help state retirees.

We in higher education owe special thanks to Sen. Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) who skillfully outmaneuvered Sen. Jeff Wentworth (R-San Antonio) in his dogged efforts to pass legislation permitting handguns on college campuses. In one of the extremely rare situations where administrators, campus police, faculty and students across the state stood in agreement, that measure was finally defeated at the eleventh hour. We dodged a bullet on that one!

Thanks to these and many other public officials and everyday citizens, efforts to raise class sizes in elementary schools were defeated, schemes to siphon off scarce state funds into private school voucher programs were pushed aside, and stronger anti-bullying measures were passed. The closure of four community colleges, including Brazosport College in our neighborhood, was stopped. In the original budget plans, the number of teachers slated to be laid off was even higher (estimates reached 100,000) and cuts in community college spending would have been deeper.

Mean and ugly indeed! The scary thing is that the structural deficit will still be with us in the next legislative session in 2013, and Jeff Wentworth will be back with his guns. What are we to do? Between 2011 and 2013 lies an election in 2012. Texas AFT’s theme for



this year is “Their Future. Our Fight. Texas Can Do Better.” So if the 2011 legislative session was not exactly your cup of tea, here are three things you can do to join the fight and make Texas better:

INFORM. Help your fellow Texans know how cuts in education affect you and them. Save Texas Schools is running a blog where you can post information about your own experiences either as an employee here or as a parent, sibling, or friend of a student in a public school. (Remember that you are not authorized to speak on behalf of Lone Star College. But you can write “I work at a public community college and here’s what’s happening.”) You can reach this blog at <http://savetxschools.org/2011/05/cuts/>.



LEARN. Texas AFT runs an information site showing how all the senators and representatives in the Texas legislature have voted on education issues. Find out where your legislator stands. Visit www.texasaft.org and click on “Political Action.”



PARTICIPATE. Support candidates, whether Republicans or Democrats, who are friendly to public education. Support them with your time, your money, and your vote, both in the primaries next spring and the general election in the fall. Again, visit www.texasaft.org and click on “Political Action” to find ways to get involved. Look especially for the link to Texas AFT C.O.P.E. (Committee on Political Education), an easy way to contribute financially to the campaigns of education-friendly candidates from both parties. Speak to your union representative to learn more about AFT Lone Star’s own C.O.P.E. fund for supporting LSCS related elections.



Texas CAN do better. Join the fight.

John Burghduff, Professor of Math, LSC-CF

Contracts

LSCS administration continues to struggle with issuing faculty contracts in a proper manner. A clear pattern of administrative behavior has emerged. Readers of *The Advocate* are aware of previous problems associated with contracts. The 2009/10 contract created an uproar among faculty. The traditional one-page contract changed that year to a three page document with no cover letter or explanation of the changes. It would seem improper for one party to change a contract without pointing the changes out to the other parties. The administration insisted that nothing of substance had changed, but with two additional pages, clearly something had changed. As a matter of fact, the new contract had language that appeared to contradict Board Policy and that was threatening or hostile to faculty. The AFT filed a grievance over the contract to insure that faculty rights had not been compromised, forcing a detailed explanation by the System’s attorney. When the 2010/11 contracts arrived, once again the language had been changed with no explanation as to why or the significance of the changes. This time, faculty were given a short time to sign the contracts and return them.

We all hoped for better treatment of faculty this academic year, but the 2011/12 contract involved another problem. Section 8.4 of the contract states: “Employee acknowledges that the System’s appointment and employment offer set forth within this Agreement is conditioned upon Employees [sic] acceptance by signing and returning to the System’s Human Resources Office within ten (10) business days from the date of the System’s offer as set forth below.” The System failed to provide ten business days for return in spite of its being *contractually* required.

At LSC-NH, faculty received their contracts in their mail boxes on Monday, August 22, and were notified that contracts must be signed by Friday, August 26, which allowed only five business days.

At LSC-MC, faculty were asked to stop by the president’s office to sign their contracts after Dr. Lane’s address on Wednesday, August 24, with a deadline of August 26 (two business days). A faculty member said, “In the president’s office, we were handed the contract and a pen with which to sign the contract (being given a pen made it ‘clear’ that they wanted the contracts signed there and then).”

At LSC-CF, faculty received an email on Wednesday, August 24 to report to the office of the Vice President of Instruction by Wednesday, August 31 (five business



days), to sign their contract in person. When a faculty member reported to the Vice President's office, the office assistant pulled the individual's contract, placed it on a clipboard, and presented it for signature with the assistant watching. Faculty at both MC and CF reported feeling intimidated by such arrangements.

At LSCS-TC, faculty were instructed to go to the office of the assistant to President Karr to sign their contracts. Dr. Karr had previously sent an email describing the procedure and indicating that the deadline of August 31 was urgent. The reasoning behind the urgency was left unexplained. Several faculty reported feeling rushed because of the desire to clear a long line of faculty waiting to sign. As a result, faculty were able to read carefully their contract only after they had left the office and had already signed it. One faculty member noted, "There was no discussion of our being able to take the contract elsewhere to examine it."



One TC faculty member reported waiting until August 29 to sign in hope of having an opportunity to read the contract in the president's assistant's office. The deadline for TC was August 31, so the faculty member was well within the deadline but received administrative communication about being one of the faculty who had not yet signed.

At LSCS-KW, faculty were notified on August 23 to sign their contracts in the president's office by August 31, again violating the ten business day stipulation.

Of particular additional concern is the tone of the contract. Rather than reading as a neutral document that lays out the terms and conditions imposed on the parties to the contract, i.e. the Board and the faculty, this document reads as hostile to faculty, identifying at least three times in two pages why faculty may be terminated. One CF faculty member commented, "I can't help but notice that it is mostly focused on the negative—what we can fire you for. The tone could be dramatically improved."

It's time for the administration to get contracts issued properly and according to the stipulations in the document itself. During the last three years we have wit-

nessed employees harassed by administrators over minor issues. One would think that an administration that takes this approach would be more careful not to violate something so important as a faculty contract. Let's hope that with next year's 2012/13 contract this three-year pattern of administrative behavior will end and proper respect for faculty will be demonstrated.

Alan Hall

A Good Outcome

Over the summer, an AFT member ran into a problem that he was unable to solve and contacted AFT-Lone Star President, Alan Hall. The member was stepping down from a supervisory position to a staff position in the same department. The employee holds several certifications and has several years experience with LSCS. In adjusting the employee's salary, the System Office moved this individual to essentially an entry-level salary. Alan Hall contacted Rand Key, Executive Vice Chancellor, laid out the problem and asked that VC Key look into the situation and, if appropriate, assist in making an adjustment of the new salary. The member contacted Alan within a few days notifying that the salary had been adjusted approximately \$2,000.

The AFT appreciates Rand Key's assistance in resolving the issue with a reasonable solution.

Our Kids: Our Future Reflections on the 2011 Biennial Texas AFT State Convention

This time of year, school kids all over the country are assigned to write that ubiquitous essay, "What I Did Over My Summer Vacation." This is my contribution to the genre. One of the highlights of my summer vacation was attending the 2011 Biennial Convention of the Texas AFT held in Corpus Christi from June 17-19. Although I've been a loyal union member for close to 20 years, it had never occurred to me to attend our conventions. This year, Alan Hall, who usually attends, was unable to attend and asked me to represent our local. I had no idea what a treat was in store for me.

The convention was attended by over 120 vibrant, energetic, and devoted teachers from pre-K to 12, and exactly one representative from higher education—my very own inquisitive self, and not for the first time I discovered that



unexpected situations can create real learning experiences. I had a wonderful time meeting kindergarten teachers, high school counselors, school bus drivers—the entire spectrum of professionals devoted to the education of Texas’ young people. The convention reminded me that we are all on the same team, striving for the same student-focused goals. Support of the AFT is a rallying point for all of us.

One interesting fact about the convention was that, although the convention was only three days long and there was plenty of union business and planning to take care of, one full day was devoted to providing quality professional development activities. Union leaders know, no matter what other issues we have to deal with, the first priority on every teacher’s mind is to find out if there is something new to learn which will help the students.

The keynote address given by Barbara Colorosa, author of *The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander*, focused on the issue of stopping school bullying. Breakout sessions included discussions on teacher-driven teacher evaluation, classroom management, support staff contributions to student growth, trends in reading education, and developments in math education. Personally, I got some new insights into K-5 math curriculum and practice to share with my Math for Teachers classes. There was even a session on handling workplace bullies: managers who treat faculty and staff pretty much the same way big bullies treat little kids on the playground.

Besides the formal sessions, I greatly enjoyed meeting union representatives from other school systems. I found it especially fascinating to talk with union leaders from school districts where school administrations embraced the union as a partner in education. For example, I met the president of the Fort Bend ISD local who worked closely with the superintendent to find ways to stretch a tight budget to avoid laying off school bus drivers. I learned how grants from the national AFT office helped fund innovative programs in the San Antonio and Austin districts.

State AFT president Linda Bridges delivered a “State of the Union” address to all members present. AFT Lone Star got special recognition for our successful lawsuit against LSCS administration restoring the rights of employees to proper representation in grievance situations. Our state and national affiliates have our personal gratitude in return for their unflagging support of our case and a number of other important cases around the state. In other news, our new sister union for CyFair ISD employees was recognized for their success in forming a successful local.

On the higher education front, we learned that a new local will soon be chartered at South Texas College. We welcome our brothers and sisters with open hearts. We at Lone Star are indeed fortunate to have the support of a strong and growing AFT local. One of the informal behind-the-scenes discussions at the convention was how to better serve faculty and staff (especially adjuncts and part-time staff) who work at colleges and universities not served by locals. Watch for developments over the next few years.

The elephant in the room was the trouble the legislature in Austin has forced on state-wide education at every level. That set of problems is important enough to deal with in a separate article. The theme of the convention was “Our Kids. Our Future.” The focus of the convention was helping students, whether kindergarteners or college freshman, even in the midst of challenging times. I am happy and humbled to be part of an organization of dedicated teachers and other professionals that is committed to this goal.

I had a great time at the Biennial Convention. As the name suggests, the next one will be in 2013. AFT Lone Star is entitled to more than one delegate. Next time you come, too!



John Burghduff, Professor of Math, LSC-CF

Time and Labor

We Shall be Led by Children

Last April, hundreds of Katy ISD students walked out of class rallying in support of teachers who were reported to have been unceremoniously fired in response to the ongoing crisis of leadership over the state budget. All across Texas, teachers are being laid off, and students are feeling the effects. Houston ISD has announced that it is reducing its faculty by 750, or 6 percent. Spring ISD is set to lay off 283 specialized workers, mostly teachers, but also nurses and guidance counselors. No one seems to know how deep the cuts will be, how extensive the damage to our economy and social structure, or how long the impact will last. Everyone seems to agree that the future for public education in Texas—already close to last in the nation—looks grim.

It could be worse. The Texas legislature has agreed to release \$3.2 billion from the state’s \$9.4 billion Rainy Day Fund in order to prevent even more drastic cuts to the current 2011 school term. They took this stopgap



action grudgingly and only because the people of Texas made it politically necessary for them to do so. The Texas AFT and Save Our Schools led rallies that numbered 11,000 at one event and 8,000 at another.



Texans called their representatives in Congress. Children took to the streets. After all, their lives are most affected by this leadership crisis. State funding for Texas schools will still be cut by \$4 billion over the next two years.

How did we get here? In 2006, Governor Rick Perry signed legislation that reduced property taxes and eliminated the franchise tax, and then replaced that revenue with a new, so called “margins tax.” It was additionally referred to as a “tax swap,” but it wasn’t an even swap. The people of Texas got shorted by about \$5 billion a year. Texas’ state comptroller at the time called it “the largest hot check in Texas history” and warned that, after five years, there would be a shortage of \$23 billion. Five years later, the shortage is actually \$27 billion. This is what is known as a structural deficit, which means that the deficit will continue to get worse, even in better financial times. Basically, it was a tax cut that is now being paid for by our children, and they won’t be happy about it.

There is an even bigger story here. Educational attainment is the single most important factor that will determine whether today’s students will earn an adequate family income, buy their own home, get health insurance, or vote. Why would Texas turn its back on this generation? Who benefits? Oil and gas companies benefit from a measure that was slipped, at the last minute, into a unanimous consent bill by then Speaker of the House Tom Craddick. Similar loopholes account for up to \$36 billion lost, most of which should have gone toward educating our young. In this way, along with the unfair tax swap, vast sums of money have been trans-

ferred from public education into the private bank accounts of wealthy Americans, many of whom have, in turn, blamed teachers for the consequences. Citing a “crisis in education,” they then look to vouchers, charter schools, and other privatization schemes for a solution. However, this is not a crisis of education. It is a crisis of leadership.

What the Katy ISD students were protesting—what the AFT and Save our Schools has been fighting—is the hollowing out of institutions that support America’s middle class. Since about 1980 a growing clique of wealthy businessmen and their political allies have demonized teachers and unions in newspapers, talk radio, and film. A recent movie, *Waiting for Superman*, blames teachers for the low standing of America’s K-12 education system (the U.S. is ranked near the bottom among developed nations, and Texas is near the bottom in the U.S.). The film echoes claims made by some of those same wealthy private school graduates that public schools are failing because unions protect bad teachers from being fired. The kids at Katy ISD know better. Their teachers are being fired because the money needed to pay them has been shoveled out of public schools and into the private bank accounts of wealthier Americans. Now, the kids are standing up. Who will stand with them?



Workers’ rights = human rights.

David Davis, Professor History



Following Bruce Machart's move to the east coast on the heels of the recent publishing success of his novel *The Wake of Forgiveness*, yours truly, Developmental Studies instructor Steve King, has agreed to serve out the remainder of Bruce's term. I'd like to announce a new meet-and-greet initiative meant to help union members at North Harris get to know one another: Union Fridays! The plan is for regular meetings each month at La Cabaña on 1960 (take Aldine-Westfield to 1960 and turn right; you'll find the restaurant on your right very quickly). The AFT will spring for appetizers. The first two meetings are **Friday, October 14th at Noon Friday, October 21st at 4.** Come by, have some nachos (or other appetizers—let me know what you like), talk shop, and get to know some of your union brothers and sisters. Alan and I look forward to seeing you there.

Also, we're trying to update the email list. As we're no longer allowed to use the Lone Star email system for union business, we're using everyone's home email for announcements and general information. If you haven't received an email request form from the union recently, please send me a note from your home email at the following address: mrking1066@gmail.com

Hope to see you soon,

Steve King, Faculty VP



With classes under way and the beginning of semester frenzy dying down, faculty and students are settling down into a nice, steady rhythm that's allowing us to really enjoy our beautiful campus and still "new" offices and classrooms. Most of the construction work on the three new buildings is complete, and, as our college president announced during Convocation, most of the items on the construction company's "punch list" have been taken care of-- YEAH! One new development that faculty and staff are looking forward to is the newly created and appointed Faculty/Staff Lounge on the second floor of the Administration Building (Building E)- complete with comfortable sofas and chairs and computer stations. The creation of the lounge was a result of a recommendation that came out of last year's Visioning Sessions, and faculty and staff truly appreciate both the opportunity to contribute to these sessions and seeing concrete results from these.

Speaking of appreciating the continuation of the tradition of soliciting faculty and staff input on matters that affect, directly or indirectly, members were taken by complete surprise when they returned to campus this fall to find out that the student newspaper, *The Voice* had been closed down without any discussion with the faculty advisors for the paper. The Faculty Advisors were simply informed and notified of the decision to close down the paper a few weeks before the fall semester and the reason given was that enrollment in the two reporting classes that provided student reporters was less than the required minimum number. In other words: The two classes were being cancelled due to low enrollment (understandably so), and so was the paper (not so understandable). Could we have explored other ways to keep the paper and student "voice" without it being "married" to the reporting classes? We like to think so. Were we given the opportunity to do so? Unfortunately, not, and this is what we find worrisome. Hopefully, being the educational institution that we are, we can turn this "worrisome" incident into a "learning" experience and come away from it a "bit" wiser than we were before it. After all, we ARE all about continuing education and life-long learning; are we not?

Finally, our members will have monthly after work socials, starting Thursday, September 29, at a location close to campus, to be announced later.

Martina Kusi-Mensah, AFT Faculty VP



Campus Updates



To quote a favorite term of Dr. Carpenter's, there is some "angst" at LSC-Kingwood as we start the fall term. Limited classroom space, parking space, unfinished construction, minimum class size, new technology in many classrooms, QEP, SACS, Learning Outcomes, iStar, Angel and 100+ degree heat have made for an interesting, problematic start to the year. I know that the faculty, staff and administration at LSC-Kingwood are working hard to focus on the "Best Start" for our students in spite of the amazing challenge of over 12,000 students. I have been working with various supervisors and administrators on a handful of staff issues. I want to thank these individuals for being receptive to visiting with me and addressing a number of concerns. I would like especially to thank Jessica Pena for having an open door and allowing me to ask questions. The spirit of cooperation at LSC-Kingwood is a direct reflection of our President, Dr. Katherine Person. Now if she can just figure out how to make it rain!

Rich Almstedt, Faculty VP



Greetings, Maties,

The Fall Cruise around the southern Isles of Education is well under way, and the HCS LSC-Tomball finally has all admiralty hands on board and seated around the table in the War Room, that being where all great ideas germinate. And speakin' of admirals, it does appear that with the addition of the two new Rear Admirals, Drs. Lee Ann Nutt and Ann Johnson, tensions around the ship have lessened a bit, particularly in the quarters of student success.

And speakin' of tensions, right now it seems the greatest worry is getting every thing primed and trimmed for the Great Admiralty Oversight Fleet oft referred to as SACS. Seems tryin' to get ever thing just perfect for the GAOF (or SACS) has got every one nervous as a gangplank walker in mid-seas (meanin' there ain't no dry land to fall onto, only the sharks below). However, once the October oversight visit comes and goes, the hope is that nerves will settle and we can get back to

enjoyin' the rest of the Fall Cruise.

A couple of reports back I mentioned that we were addin' some space to the ship for more animals, entertainment, and sick bay. Well, those quarters are almost done and, not to brag, but they shore are a beautiful addition to the HCS LSC-Tomball. Everyone needs to come see our crew's first entertainin' show this coming October.

And speaking of entertaining, we invite all the petty officers (staff), Lieutenants (professors), and Commanders (chairs) to our off-ship gatherin' to be held the third Wednesday of every month. Check with your friendly AFT members as to the exact location for each month and come join us for some chattin' and relaxin'.

I know that you are all interested in any problems around the ship, but while I know of a couple of small issues, the addition of the new admiralty on board seems to have given most crew members a sense of renewed hope. Time will tell, and so will I.

Tell next we meet, keep the sheets starched, the lines taut, and the decks scrubbed.

Richard Becker, Faculty VP



AFT Lone Star College welcomes Kerry Madole as staff vice president for LSC-CyFair. Kerry joins John Burghduff, faculty vice president, in representing the interests of union members at CyFair. Look for our contact information on the last page of this issue of *The Advocate*. When you need us, we are here to help!

Announcing AFT Lone Star College-CyFair monthly happy hours!

Whether you are a union member or not, whether you are faculty or staff, whether you are a fulltime or part time employee, whether you work at the main campus on Barker Cypress or at Fairbanks Center, please join us every **SECOND THURSDAY** of the month from 5 PM - 7 PM at HUSKY'S on West Road just east of Telge. Come learn about the union, discuss issues of importance to you or just hang out and have a good time with great people. Stay a few minutes or stay the whole time, whatever works for you. The union will provide appetizers and (nonalcoholic!) beverages. You are welcome to purchase OTHER beverages if you like!

John Burghduff Faculty VP



AFT - Lone Star College

AFT Local Union # 4518

Strong, Active, Vocal: A Union of Professionals



American Federation of Teachers
Texas AFT
AFL - CIO



Local: www.aftlonestar.org
281-889-1009

State: www.texasaft.org

National: www.aft.org

Monthly AFT Dues

Membership Eligibility

Full-time Faculty	\$33.75
Full-time Professional Staff	\$27.81
Full-time Support Staff	\$23.21
Adjunct Faculty & Staff	\$11.88

Membership in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is open to full and part-time faculty and staff up through the dean level. If you would like to join or find out more information about membership, please contact any of the officers listed on page 16 of this newsletter, or check out our online information and application at:

www.aftlonestar.org



AFT-Lone Star College

GOALS

- To promote academic excellence
- To protect academic freedom in higher education
- To preserve and protect the integrity and unique identity of each of the institutions of higher education in Texas
- To protect the dignity and rights of faculty against discrimination
- To ensure that faculty have an effective voice on all matters pertaining to their welfare
- To secure for all members the rights to which they are entitled
- To raise the standards of the profession by establishing professional working conditions
- To encourage democratization of higher education
- To promote the welfare of the citizens of Texas by providing better educational opportunities for all
- To initiate and support state legislation which will benefit the students and faculty of Texas
- To promote and assist the formation and growth of Texas United Faculty chapters throughout Texas
- To maintain and promote the aims of the American Federation of Texas and other affiliated labor bodies

BENEFITS

- \$8,000,000 Occupational Liability Insurance
 - provides security while teaching
 - protection against litigation
 - malpractice protection
- \$25,000 Accidental Death Insurance
- Legal Assistance
 - Free consultation and representation on grievances and job related problems
 - Services of leading labor attorneys
 - Legal Defense Fund protection
- Political Power
 - Texas AFT lobbyists in Austin
 - AFT lobbyists in Washington
 - Representation at the Coordinating Board
 - Support for local electoral work
- Affiliations
 - Affiliated with the Texas AFL-CIO
 - Affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and Texas AFT
- Staff Services
 - Professional representatives to assist and advise in processing grievances
 - AFT research facilities
 - Leadership Training
- Savings and discounts on goods and services with AFT PLUS Benefits
- Free \$10,000 term life insurance policy for first year of membership

Professional career protection and a united voice at work.

www.aftlonestar.org

American Federation of Teachers -Lone Star College Membership Application

AFT-Lone Star College is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers and the Texas AFT and accepts membership from all non-supervisory employees of the Lone Star College System. Indicate below whether you are a new member or a current member wishing to update your contact information. Membership with AFT-Lone Star College provides each member with an \$8 million Professional Occupational Liability coverage policy, legal defense coverage and access to representation for work-related issues. In addition, AFT-Lone Star College members are entitled to special savings and discounts through our AFT PLUS benefits program. **If you have questions about joining, please call AFT- Lone Star College @ 281-889-1009. You may also visit our website: www.aftlonestar.org**

- 1) Fill out the application below and choose your method of payment
- 2) Remit this application to AFT-Lone Star College President, Alan Hall

By US mail: AFT - Lone Star College P.O. Box 788 Spring, Texas 77383-0788 **OR** Interoffice mail: Alan Hall @ A-217, North Harris



2011-2012 Monthly Membership Dues rates:
Based on your position with the Lone Star College System, please select your appropriate dues rate.

Full-time Faculty \$33.75/mo. or \$405.00/yr.

Full-time Professional Staff \$27.81/mo. or \$333.72/yr.

Full-time Support Staff \$24.21/mo. or \$290.52/yr.

Adjunct Faculty \$11.88/mo. or \$142.56/yr.

Part-time Staff \$11.88/mo. or \$142.56/yr.



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Payroll deduction allows members to pay union dues in monthly installments. If you prefer to write a check to pay for your union dues, be advised that AFT requires the full yearly amount payable in 2 six-month installments. Exceptions to the rule apply for Part-time Staff and Adjunct Faculty only.

First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Middle Initial:	<input type="text"/>	Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
Home Address:	<input type="text"/>				
City:	<input type="text"/>	State:	<input type="text"/>	Zip code:	<input type="text"/>
Home Phone:	<input type="text"/>	Email Address:	<input type="text"/>		
Employee ID #:	<input type="text"/>	Campus:	<input type="text"/>		
Position:	<input type="text"/>	Room #:	<input type="text"/>	Referred by:	<input type="text"/>
I am paid: <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-monthly		Paid over: <input type="checkbox"/> 9 months <input type="checkbox"/> 9.5 months <input type="checkbox"/> 12 months			
Are you a current or new member? <input type="checkbox"/> Current member <small>(Updating information and/or payment method)</small> <input type="checkbox"/> New Member					
Choose method of payment: <input type="checkbox"/> Payroll Deduction <small>(Complete the union dues agreement below)</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Check <small>(Two 6 month payments payable to AFT-LSC)</small>					

Union Dues Deduction Agreement

I hereby authorize Lone Star College System to deduct each pay period an amount equal to the dues in the amounts fixed in accordance with the Bylaws of AFT including any increase in dues in future years and pay same to said Union in accordance with the terms of the agreement between Lone Star College System and American Federation of Teachers. This agreement will remain in effect until Lone Star College System receives a written notice of cancellation from me, AFT or at the time of my termination, whichever occurs first. This authorization is subject to sufficient wages being available to comply with all other required deductions and existing federal and state laws.

Signature: (Print this form and sign here) **Date**

For AFT-Lone Star College office use only. Do not write in this box.

Position verified: YES NO (Initials) _____ **NOTES:** _____

Dues Class: FTF AF FTFS FTSS PTS C _____



P.O. Box 788 Spring, Texas 77383-0788

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www.aftlonestar.org



CALL FOR ARTICLES

We invite all employees to send us their opinions, news, questions, and so forth. *The Advocate* is a forum for information and free interchange of ideas. Send your articles to **Pat Gray, Editor**, LSC NH A 217, or e-mail patsy.gray@lonestar.edu, or submit to any of the other following officers:

Alan Hall, President	North Harris College	ACAD 217-G	281-618-5544
Linda Dirzanowski	North Harris College	Health Professions Red Oak	281-943-6819
Stephen King	North Harris College	ACAD 162-H	281-618- 5530
Bob Locander	North Harris College	ACAD 270	281-618-5592
Allen Vogt	North Harris College	ACAD 264-C	281-618-5583
Rich Almstedt	Kingwood College	FTC 100-G	281-312-1656
Laura Codner	Kingwood College	CLA 110	281-312- 1414
Catherine Olson	Tomball College	S 153 - H	281-357- 3776
Richard Becker	Tomball College	E 271-D	281-401- 1835
Janet Moore	Tomball College	E 210 -E	281-401-1871
Martina Kusi-Mensa	Montgomery College	SSC-209 J	936-273- 7276
John Burghduff	Cy-Fair College	HSC 117-R	281-290-3915
Kerry Madole	Cy-Fair College	LRNC - 101	281-290-5277
Brenda Rivera	Fairbanks Center	119	832-782-5068
Earl Brewer	Fairbanks center	S - 13	832-782-5029

Membership Has Its Benefits

The union encourages employees to join because they believe that college employees should have a voice in their professional lives. We don't encourage employees to join because they anticipate conflict or are already engaged in a conflict. In fact, if they are already embroiled in a situation, we are unable to help them. It is all too common for someone to approach the AFT and say something like, "I've been an employee for the district for several years, and I've just recognized the importance of joining." Typically, following that comment is, "I'm in trouble and need help." I finally lost track of how many times in the last year I've had to say, "I'm sorry, but member benefits don't cover anything that pre-dates membership." The individuals to whom I had to give this message were invited to join and provided some advice on

how to proceed with their situation, but assistance ended there. Were they members, a host of benefits would have been available. The AFT provides its members with advice and guidance as well as representation in conflict resolution and grievances. We have our own local attorney and can seek legal advice and counsel for members. We maintain a local legal defense fund. In addition, membership dues include, at no extra charge, \$8 million in professional liability insurance for claims arising out of professional activities. Most of our members don't join because they believe that they may need the AFT's help in a conflict. They join because they believe in the values of the AFT—that employees should be treated with dignity and respect, that employees should help each other, that employees should have a voice in their

professional lives, that employees deserve fair pay and good working conditions, and that the district needs a system providing checks and balances. They join because they want to support an organization that helps others in so many ways. A nice benefit is that, if they do need help, it's there for them.

If you believe in these values and are not a member, now is the perfect time to join. The AFT advocated effectively for the raise employees received this year. The annual membership dues are a small percentage of the raise. If you believe in our values, take action now and join the AFT.

Alan Hall