



Colorado Connection

4th Quarter 2016

2016 Election

The 2016 election brought a lot of good news—and some less-than-good news—for public education in Colorado. The vast majority of the candidates AFT Colorado endorsed were elected or re-elected, but many of the ballot initiatives we opposed, passed. One exciting exception was the passage of Amendment 70 – which will raise the minimum wage to \$12 an hour by the year 2020. In a year when voter turnout decreased in many states across the country, Colorado vastly outpaced the national average and voted at a [near record-breaking level for Colorado](#).

We saw a historic victory in the Sixth Congressional District State Board of Education election with the selection of our endorsed candidate – Rebecca McClellan. Rebecca will be a great ally for public education as the only board member with children in public schools and her victory will bring the first Democratic majority on the State Board in nearly fifty years. The State Board will now be occupied by four Democrats and three Republicans.

Alice Madden, the candidate AFT Colorado endorsed for CU-Regent at large, failed to gain the votes needed to win her race against Heidi Ganahl.

There were four races that were believed to determine the balance of the State Senate, and of the four candidates we endorsed in these races, two were victorious and two were defeated. The two pro-public education candidates who won were Daniel Kagan in senate District 26 (southwestern Arapahoe County) and Rachel Zenzinger in District 19 (northeastern Jefferson County). The two candidates who were defeated were Tom Sullivan in



District 27 (southeastern Arapahoe County) and Jenise May in District 25 (northeastern Arapahoe County). The Republicans maintained their 18-17 majority in the State Senate.

Of the thirty-six candidates we endorsed for the State House, thirty were victorious and six were defeated. A notable victory for public education, and a race where volunteers from AFT Colorado spent a lot of their time, was Jeff Bridges' defeat of Katy Brown in house District 3 (southwestern Arapahoe County). The race was anticipated to be one of, if not the, closest race in state. Bridges ended up winning the seat by a little more than 2,000 votes – a much larger margin than anticipated.

Finally, Amendment 71, which makes it more difficult—or nearly impossible—to amend Colorado's constitution, was approved by the majority of Colorado voters. This is unfortunate because this will make it much more difficult to amend or eliminate TABOR and therefore make it much more difficult to improve our education funding crisis in Colorado. Also, propositions 107 and 108, which established a presidential primary in Colorado and opened up primary elections to unaffiliated voters, respectively. Both passed.



Great Education COLORADO

AFT Colorado hosted the non-profit organization Great Education Colorado at our office in Englewood on November 17th to discuss the current financial climate of education in Colorado and the obstacles we face in correcting it; as well as, opportunities to make progress in improving our children’s educational future.

The education budget can be a very complicated and confusing topic. As educators and public school employees, it’s incredibly important we understand it so that we can advocate on ours and our students behalf for a better education system. Great Education Colorado has taken the effort to create an easy to use online tool that will greatly help you better understand the state education budget. If you would like to learn more about Great Education Colorado and the current state of our education budget, visit <https://www.greateducation.org/>.

You can also find the incredibly helpful online budget tool [HERE](#).



AMERICAN DREAM ★ SWEEPSTAKES ★

Unions are the cornerstone of the American dream. So for our 30th anniversary, we want to celebrate union members by giving away more than \$100,000 in prizes.



REGISTER 9/29/16 – 12/31/16 TO WIN:

\$500 gift cards
to 12 winners every week



\$30,000
Grand Prize to 1 winner

Sponsored by the Union Plus Credit Card Program. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Sweepstakes starts 10/10/16 at 12:00 AM ET and ends 12/31/16 at 11:59:59 PM ET. Open only to eligible legal residents of the United States, D.C., U.S. territories and military bases, who are Union Plus Credit Cardholders or current/retired eligible union members as of 9/28/16 and 18 years and older. Subject to Official Rules available at UnionPlusSweeps.com. See Official Rules for complete details, including entry instructions, entry periods, odds of winning, prize information, eligible unions, restrictions, etc. Void where prohibited. Message & data rates may apply. Sponsored by Capital One, N.A., 1680 Capital One Drive, McLean, VA 22102.

The MasterCard Brand Mark is a registered trademark of MasterCard International Incorporated.

© 2016 Union Privilege. All rights reserved. Union Plus benefits are for participating union members, retirees and their families. Union Privilege, 1100 1st St NE, Suite 850, Washington, D.C. 20002.

© 2016 Capital One.

2017 Legislative Session

The 2017 Legislative Session begins January 11th. AFT Colorado has been busy meeting with state legislators, house and senate leadership, community allies, and other unions to build a proactive agenda that helps working families. We will be holding our local lobby days as usual this year in addition to participating in the Colorado AFL- CIO Labor Day at the Capitol. Please contact your local president for dates.



Back-to-School Help from “Share My Lesson”

“Share My Lesson,” the online teacher resource center in which the American Federation of Teachers is a partner, can save you time and help you succeed in back-to-school planning. [Teacher toolkits](#) combine hundreds of the freshest, most popular lesson plans, printable worksheets, class activities and more.

To make it easier, Share My Lesson groups preK-12 teacher toolkits by grade and by subject area, including

ELA for grades 11-12, science, math and social studies. All materials are provided by your peers and education partners like the National Science Foundation, MIT Blossoms and Civics. Welcome to a year full of new ideas, free new materials and much more!



Local Union Updates



Winter Outerwear Drive

The Douglas County Federation has partnered with high school students to sponsor a coat and winter outerwear drive for Douglas County School District students. The students worked in the office, calling members to find students who are in need of donations, as well as, soliciting donations of outerwear. The project was started as part of a study of the Progressive Era in a US History class. The DCF is still accepting donations. Email Kelli Eastmond at kseastmond@dougcofed.org for more information.



DFPNSE

Denver Federation for Paraprofessionals
and Nutrition Service Employees

Park Hill Lunchroom

On Thursday, November 10, 2016, when Park Hill Lunchroom staff was busy serving their Thanksgiving meal, a generous parent came down to the lunchroom with the Principal and presented the manager with a check for \$1,000 to put in a special account to help feed any student who did not have money or was not able to eat a hot lunch. The parent said his children liked eating the lunches so he wanted other children to have the same opportunity. Great Job Park Hill lunchroom staff and "Thank You" to the generous parent for showing everyone what Thanksgiving is really about.



In Memoriam: Vincent Z. C. de Baca



Longtime union and civil rights activist, Metropolitan State University of Denver professor and defender of academic freedom, Vincent C. de Baca died on November 12, 2016. He was 66 years old. Vince honed his union activist skills in the farm workers' struggle in California. He served as coordinator of security for United Farm Workers' leader Cesar Chavez in the 1960s and 1970s.

Vince was a rigorous, committed and inspiring teacher with a wicked sense of humor and a keen eye for the absurd. He was also committed to struggles for equality and social justice. In 2003, the Metro State Board of Trustees unilaterally and retroactively abrogated tenure with a new handbook, threatening the academic freedom of the faculty and quality education for the students. Vince was among the first teacher-scholar-activists to step forward to fight back against these threats. He was a member of the AFT Colorado sponsored Metro Organizing Committee, and subsequently elected to every Steering Committee term once Metropolitan State Faculty Federation was recognized as AFT Local 6321. Vince was present at the AFT Colorado 2005 Convention when the local was publicly awarded its charter and his name is prominently listed as a charter member.

The MSFF flourished with Vince's help and he was seemingly everywhere. He strategized, recruited members and represented colleagues in meetings with administration. He patiently listened to those who had fears and empowered them. As soon as the MSFF finished negotiations that restored tenure to the faculty, Vince reminded the local that the struggle was not over and was a fierce advocate for bettering working conditions and pay for contingent faculty and other employees at Metro. He recognized that increased faculty compensation came at the expense of higher tuition for students, and that an injury to one was an injury to all. When the MSFF needed a representative to a local political event or to a national meeting of AFT, Vince, stretching his already overburdened schedule, would attend.

Since 2015, Vince was the MSFF representative to the AFT Colorado Executive Board. He was eager to serve. That was not surprising, for, of course, Vince realized that without AFT Colorado there would be no MSFF and it was likely that tenure would never have been restored. Its demise at Metro could have set a precedent for similar intrusions throughout Colorado and elsewhere in the US. But, more than that, Vince was dedicated to advancing the program of AFT Colorado in the name of solidarity with every teacher, professor, para-professional, nutrition service provider, bus driver and classified staffer.

Ellen A. Slatkin, President:

For the Officers and Steering Committee of the MSFF

AFT COLORADO
STANDING TOGETHER: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Committee on Political Education (COPE) Deduction

www.aftcolorado.org 720-443-8032

What is COPE? COPE is how AFT Colorado raises and collects voluntary political contributions from members. COPE is a non partisan political education committee. These voluntary funds are used statewide to help back candidates and committees that support education and labor. There is one reason AFT Colorado needs to grow our COPE program, **YOU**. With the current economic environment our priorities are vulnerable and are constantly being targeted for reduction. Education budgets, programs, and services are often first on the chopping block when states face dwindling tax revenues. Along with decent working conditions, retirement, and health care. All vitally affect our lives. A strong COPE program will protect our various interests.

At the local level COPE is essential. AFT Colorado will use your voluntary funds to assist in school board races, levies, and referendums in your district. Reductions in state education aid and inflation have made local budgets even more of a challenge. We use COPE dollars to work with labor and education friendly supporters on both sides of the aisle.

FIRST NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

BILLING ADDRESS _____

BILLING CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____  wish to receive periodic text messages and accept the associated charges.

HOME EMAIL _____ LOCAL _____

WORK LOCATION _____

PAYMENT

*Due to the associated fees, we prefer that you sign up for **bank draft** payment.*

MONTHLY COPE AMOUNT \$5 \$10 \$15 \$OTHER _____

BANK DRAFT ***PREFERRED METHOD*******

Fill out below or simply attach a voided check.

BANK NAME _____

ROUTING NUMBER _____ ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD: If you choose this method, we will follow up with you to change to bank draft at a later date. CARD

TYPE: VISA MC

NAME ON CARD _____

CARD NUMBER _____ EXP DATE _____

I hereby authorize a monthly contribution to the AFT CO COPE (AFT CO COPE) in the amount indicated above. This authorization is signed freely and voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal, and I will not be favored nor disadvantaged because I exercise this right. I understand this money will be used to make political contributions by AFT CO COPE. AFT CO COPE may engage in joint fundraising efforts with AFT COPE and/or the AFL-CIO. This voluntary authorization may be revoked at any time by notifying AFT CO COPE in writing of the desire to do so. Contribution or gifts to AFT CO COPE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions cannot be reimbursed or otherwise paid by any other person or entity.