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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

## News Release

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### **Groundbreaking Partnership Will Revamp Teacher Workforce**

*AFT and AASA's Nationwide Work Will Focus First on Districts in Michigan, Ohio and Colorado*

**WASHINGTON**—Real education reform takes a significant step forward today as the American Federation of Teachers and the American Association of School Administrators launch a groundbreaking partnership based on their commitment to ensure a skilled teacher workforce for the knowledge-based economy.

The broad goal of the partnership is to take the concrete steps that are necessary to make our American school systems world-class. As a first step, we need to systematically recruit, develop and retain great educators. The two organizations have adopted a framework to continuously improve the nation's teaching force, revamp teacher development and evaluation systems, and provide teachers and schools the tools and support they need. The framework is based on the principles that most successful countries use to develop and sustain a highly trained and well-supported educator workforce.

The collaboration between the two organizations, often seen as being on opposite sides of issues affecting the teacher workforce, is a sharp contrast to ideology-driven efforts in some states that would strip teachers of resources and rights.

AFT President Randi Weingarten and AASA Executive Director Dan Domenech said the partnership between the groups is significant for two reasons—it reinforces their commitment to labor-management collaboration at the national and local levels as the means to real education reform, and is the beginning of a major collective push to provide teachers with support and help to improve instruction.

"What makes this effort special is that our two organizations don't just adopt policies—we make things happen where it matters, in classrooms across the country," said the AASA's Domenech.

The AFT's Weingarten said: "As to evaluation, for example, teachers want real feedback that is not simply a snapshot but a tangible way to enable our teaching to be best it can be. That means overhauling

evaluation systems district by district to ensure they are comprehensive, meaningful and fair. Improving teacher quality can't be simply a catch phrase. It has to be put into practice."

Under the AFT/AASA framework, teacher evaluation is overhauled and aligned to the needs of students for the knowledge economy. There are clear standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, criteria for identifying struggling teachers, and requirements for providing those teachers with tools and resources to become better. For teachers whose work remains unsatisfactory even after receiving the additional help, there is an expedient, fair hearing process that will last 100 days at most and often much less.

"Due process is vital, but we recognize that it can't become a shield for ineffective teachers or an excuse for managers not to fulfill their responsibilities," Weingarten said.

Together, the organizations are encouraging local superintendents and teachers unions to jointly design, based on the framework, evaluation systems that provide useful, timely feedback to help teachers improve their craft.

Since the AFT initially announced its work in January 2010, the framework has been used in development and evaluation plans in more than 100 school districts across the country. The new partnership will support an ongoing statewide effort in Michigan, where the Michigan Association of School Administrators and AFT Michigan have been working together on such a system through the Education Alliance of Michigan. Other states soon will follow, and several individual school districts in Ohio and Colorado also recently signed on.

For a detailed description of the AASA-AFT partnership and framework, see here:  
<http://www.aft.org/pdfs/teachers/AFTAASA062811.pdf>.

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The American Association of School Administrators, founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 13,000 educational leaders across America and in many other countries. AASA advocates for the highest quality public education for all students, and develops and supports school system leaders. For more information, visit [www.aasa.org](http://www.aasa.org). Follow AASA on twitter at [www.twitter.com/AASAHQ](http://www.twitter.com/AASAHQ) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/AASAPage](http://www.facebook.com/AASAPage).

The AFT represents 1.5 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators. For more information, visit [www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org). Follow AFT on twitter at [www.twitter.com/AFTunion](http://www.twitter.com/AFTunion) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/AFTunion](http://www.facebook.com/AFTunion).