

Testing and Evaluation

Whereas, AFSA recognizes the value of assessments in determining whether individual students and statistical subgroups, among them English Language Learners, are learning on grade level, to inform learning and to target resources to those students and subgroups that need additional assistance to grasp key concepts; and

Whereas, AFSA recognizes the value of principal evaluation systems that reflect the complexity of principal positions, measure the leadership competencies required for student and school success, and that have as primary goals the improvement of principal practice, and not used for punitive purposes; and

Whereas, AFSA objects to the use of high-stakes assessments as the major basis for evaluating individual teachers and principals and the attendant consequences that such assessments drive curricular choices, leading schools and districts to reduce course offerings in art, music, physical education, CTE and other academic areas critical to ensuring the development of well-rounded students; and

Whereas, AFSA believes strongly that recruiting, retaining and training principals and school-based leaders are vital components of ensuring high quality K-12 education; and

Whereas, school leaders occupy unique positions in the K-12 education system; and

Whereas, the role of principals continues to expand, and they continue to fulfill increased responsibilities, such as establishing school environments conducive to teaching and learning, implementing new state education standards and assessments, monitoring accountability requirements, coordinating educational technology and broadband needs, and conducting teacher evaluations and providing feedback; and

Whereas, despite principals being responsible for such singular duties and responsibilities, federal professional development funding is not directed specifically towards the continued provision and support for providing professional learning nor are the limited training opportunities necessarily appropriate to and geared directly towards principals; and

Whereas, academic research shows that investing in principal professional development is a worthwhile investment;

Therefore be it resolved, that AFSA supports federal legislation, regulation and guidance that would provide dedicated funding specifically for professional

development and mentoring for early childhood, elementary, middle and high school principals and other educational leaders; and

Be it further resolved, that AFSA supports legislation that will restrict the federal government from imposing assessment requirements on the individual states and will support the continuity of state-driven assessments in key subject areas and differentiated state accountability systems that capture how schools are performing so that curriculum and instruction can be aligned to best meet the needs of students; and

Be it further resolved, that AFSA supports the use of growth models and multiple measures of student performance in state accountability systems and the use of assessment data to improve student learning; and that provides for a safety net; and

Be it further resolved, that AFSA supports evaluating the school and district through a variety of lenses, which are critical to ensure the learning needs of students are met in all subjects, and that educators are being accurately evaluated on overall performance; and

Be it further resolved, that AFSA supports legislation that will lead to the reduction of the numbers of annual state assessments and that will promote wider school and district course offerings, and AFSA will support efforts to determine which testing instrument is most suitable for the specific student population and simultaneously incorporate components that correlate the testing and teaching, so that they complement one another to help students achieve academic success; and

Be it further resolved, that AFSA will only support legislation and regulations that lead to the development of fair and transparent principal evaluation systems that place a high priority on outcomes which principals control rather than those they have limited or no ability to impact, and where no more than 25 percent of the evaluations are based on the results of student assessments and where the evaluation system is collaboratively developed with the input of principals, is designed to measure multiple domains of effective school leadership, provides meaningful feedback to individual principals, is based on multiple measures, and takes into account student growth as well as evidence of effective school leadership practice.