

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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June 29, 2006

Dear NEA Local Leader:

I am extremely pleased to invite you into a promising new partnership with the working women and men of the AFL-CIO.

As we are all too aware, these are challenging times for our nation's working families. Under the new Solidarity Partnership Agreement, the NEA and AFL-CIO have the historic opportunity to combine our respective skills and strengths to help families meet those challenges. Together, we can build a better future -- not only for all those who work in education throughout this country of ours, but for our children and our communities as well.

We have long admired NEA's principled leadership on issues of education and equity. Throughout the proud histories of our two organizations, we have partnered at the national level to work for social and economic justice, investment in public education and better working conditions for public employees. And we have shared many victories. Now we can forge new bonds and make new gains in school boards, in city councils, and state houses where so many decisions affect the quality of working families' lives.

"In this political climate," President Weaver said recently, "our organizations need to build on our common goals, and advocate together for our members and our children... Through joint activities we can better strengthen our communities, strengthen our public schools, and strengthen our organizations."

Hundreds of thousands of NEA members have already worked with AFL-CIO central labor councils and state federations in some legislative and political campaigns. The Partnership Agreement enables us to expand and strengthen that unity. It will give NEA members a greater voice in the full range of decisions that AFL-CIO bodies make each and every day—decisions which impact the everyday lives of students, parents and communities.

I encourage those of you who have worked with central labor councils to apply now for Solidarity Partnership affiliation with the AFL-CIO. For those who are not already involved with your local labor council, I hope you will investigate the opportunity by visiting our website (<http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/jointheaflcio/nea.cfm>) and contacting our helpful Unity Partnerships Team by e-mailing unity@aflcio.org or calling 1-877-90-UNITY [1-877-908-6489] or, in the Washington, D.C. area, 202-639-6425.

I look forward to many successful joint efforts that will make our towns, states and nation work for children, school employees and all working families.

Sincerely,


John J. Sweeney
President

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