



A Union of Professionals

Gun Violence Prevention Talking Points

The next election has taken on an urgency we haven't experienced in recent memory. This is truly a "whose side are you on?" moment.

We have a president who ran as a populist but is governing as an elitist. Unions are under attack. Instead of bring the country together, the Trump administration and its allies have spent more than a year undermining our democratic norms and pushing an agenda for the rich—from ripping healthcare away from millions to his new tax law that gives 83 percent of the benefits to the top 1 percent.

But unions are built for these times. Unions were born out of tough times.

We are educators, nurses and health professionals, and public service employees because we care for others—for our students, our patients and the public we serve.

Gun violence:

- The issue of safety—in schools, universities, other workplaces and our communities—is personal for members in every division, and we are united in fighting for safe schools and resources for mental health and other social and emotional services on an ongoing basis—not just after the fact.
- Facts on this issue:
 - The AFT supports the activism led by students as a result of the tragic mass shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., and Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas. More than 187,000 students have been exposed to gun violence in schools since the Columbine shootings in 1999.
 - Teachers, paraprofessionals and other school staff, principals and administrators have shown over and over again their instinct to shield and protect students in these tragic situations, and their acts of heroism should be lifted up while at the same time doubling down on efforts to ensure safe working environments free from gun violence.
 - The AFT is also pushing for measures to reduce gun violence—measures that even many National Rifle Association members support—like universal background checks, eliminating bump stocks and fighting the arming of teachers. We will support elected officials who back commonsense measures to stop gun violence in schools and institutions of higher education.

This election is a "whose side are you on?" moment. Will you support candidates who oppose reasonable gun control policies and want to arm teachers, or candidates who are fighting to protect our students from gun violence and provide resources for mental health and other services?

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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