

NEWSLETTER

Local 1075

January 2025

Meet Our Executive Board:

Kelly Erinakes – President
Debra Lathrop – VP
 Elementary
Joe Fargnoli – VP Secondary
Tiffany Risch – Secretary
Greg Wightman – Treasurer
Sue Toohey-Kaye –
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Ted Mitchell – Public Relations

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John Kelly – CHS Rep.
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Christine Conklin – ASFMS Rep.
Derek Larginho – ASFMS Rep.
Jennifer Limoges – Western Rep.
Colleen Riessen – Western Rep.
Tara D’Aleno – Tiogue Rep.
Julie Marran – Hopkins Hill Rep.
Kristin Hill – Washington Oak Rep.
Michelle Gallagher – Washington Oak Rep.
Helen Tiernan – Blackrock Rep.

Membership Meeting Dates:

March 13th
 May 8th

ASFMS @ 4PM



AFT's premier publication for educators, American Educator: Winter 2024-25 –

The latest edition can be found [HERE](#). This is a great and free resource to AFT members. The latest articles are linked below.

[Where We Stand: Fighting for Our Children's Future](#) – Randi Weingarten

[The Kids Are Not OK, But Education Innovations Provide Hope](#) – Carol Graham

[The Right to Rap: How Hip Hop Helps Students Heal from Trauma](#) – J. C. Hall

[Finding Connection and Confidence Through Hip Hop](#) – Ephraim Weir

[Ask the Cognitive Scientist: Understanding Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom](#) – R. J. R. Blair, Daniel T. Willingham

[Welcoming Migrant Students: Lessons from Colombia](#) – Joshua Lerner

[Mandated Support in Education – Protecting Children by Assisting Families](#) – Chelsea Prax

[Past and Present: The Trauma of Family Separation](#) – Chelsea Prax

[Betrayed No More: How Morally Centered Schools Reduce Educators' and Students' Distress](#) – Wendy Dean, Rachel Schaffer

[Rethinking Reading: Differentiating Comprehension from the Components of Reading](#) – Hugh W. Catts, Alan G. Kamhi

[Share My Lesson: Supporting Educator and Student Well-Being](#)



Congress passed and President Biden signed the Social Security Fairness Act into law recently. Unions fought hard to ensure that teachers are eligible to earn the benefits enjoyed by most citizens.

Coventry teachers don't pay Social Security taxes each year through their paycheck. If you have only worked as a Coventry teacher and you don't have a spouse or partner that does pay into the system, this law won't change anything. On the other hand, many of us have worked other jobs either part-time or in another district that did pay Social Security taxes. Under the old system, our hard earned Social Security benefits would be reduced. The following except here best explains how the new law will play out for us:

“As an example of how the new law could work, consider a married couple with one spouse who receives \$4,000 each month from a pension provided by a public-sector job that did not pay into Social Security. The other spouse worked in the private sector, paying into Social Security enough to be eligible for a \$2,000 monthly government retirement benefit. Under now-repealed GPO rules, spousal benefits were only paid if half the benefit amount exceeded two-thirds of the pension amount. Half the \$2,000 benefit amount, or \$1,000, is less than two-thirds of the \$4,000 pension, or \$1,333. So, this spouse has until now gotten nothing from Social Security. With the new act, this couple can now potentially receive another \$2,000 per month, a sizable boost to their retirement budget.” (Yahoo Finance!)

If you have worked another job that has paid into Social Security, you may now earn full benefits of this deduction like all citizens. See the Social Security calculators in the section on the next page for what you might expect.



Tell Congress: Hands off Medicaid!

Corporations and the rich want Congress to cut healthcare funding to pay for tax cuts. Medicaid supports people from birth to retirement and beyond; it is essential to keeping hospitals open and supporting students at school. Cutting Medicaid will hurt individual patients and entire communities.

“About 72 million people receive health coverage through Medicaid. It pays for 2 in 5 births in the U.S. and is the nation's largest payer both of behavioral health services, which include mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and long-term care services, either at home or in nursing facilities. Medicaid helps children develop into healthy adults and helps adults stay healthy. And it's an overwhelmingly popular program.” (Center for Budget & Policy Priorities)

[Contact Your Senators Here](#)

CTA Newsletter



Professional Learning & You

AFT's Winter 2025 Virtual Professional Learning

Beginning this February, AFT will launch their Winter 2025 Professional Learning series of six (6) virtual workshops designed exclusively for AFT members that are structured to engage, energize and equip you with practical, ready-to-use strategies!

Workshop Offerings

Full descriptions, dates and times can be found online at aftpd.org/program/winterpd. These workshops will take place on Zoom. Please plan to join through a device that accommodates Zoom interaction.

- **Civics 101** - We'll dive into the core tenets of civics education, the pillars of democracy and tackle the question "What is truth?" Be prepared to engage with other members in discerning misinformation from disinformation as we equip you with the tools and strategies to be informed digital citizens. You will walk away with strategies you can implement the next day in your classroom, work site and in daily life.
- **Differentiating Instruction** - This Strategies for Student Success (SSS) module will examine three models of differentiated instruction: Tomlinson's tiered lessons, Conklin's choice boards and Sternberg's triarchic model.

(Continued)

- **Students, Advanced Technology and Learning** - Today's students are regularly using advanced technology as they tap into their natural inclination to access information, communicate and create. It is essential for all educators to have the opportunity to build their own knowledge and skills with advanced technology, such as artificial intelligence, in order to use it most effectively for instruction.
- **Students with Challenges** - In education, currency is a medium of exchange, and any behavior students use to acquire knowledge and skills functions as currency. However, students who are "wired" differently or face traumatic experiences may not possess this currency. This session demonstrates how to meet students where they are to ensure success.
- **Teach Them to Think** - There seems to be little time to teach the soft skills that standards and curricula have always demanded. In this SSS module, we will show educators how to make decision-making, problem-solving and assessing the reliability of a source more explicit during instruction.
- **Trauma-Informed Strategies to Help Students Heal** - Participants will learn and practice 10 research-based trauma-informed practices to boost student resilience and will gain a deeper understanding of how adversity can impact children's developing brains, bodies and behaviors.

Workshops begin Feb. 3, and space is limited. Register now to secure your spots! Please contact Sue directly at tooheykayesusan@coventryschools.net with any specific questions.

Register Here



Calculating Your Possible Benefits from Social Security?

Here are some ways you can see what you might get upon retirement from Social Security, in addition to your pension.

DISCLAIMER: *The calculators and resulting numbers are estimates.*

1. **Social Security Account:**

Create your personal Social Security account. (You can also get a replacement card here). [Click here.](#)

2. **Eligibility:** Check whether you are eligible or not. [Click here.](#)

3. **Benefit Amount:** Check to see how much you might get upon retirement. [Click here.](#)

4. **Retirement Age:** What year can you retire and collect Social Security? [Click here.](#)



Calculate what you might expect from your state pension upon retirement. **DISCLAIMER:** This is also an estimate.

[ERSRI Benefit Calculator](#)
([click here](#))



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