

HIGHER EDUCATION

2011 Resolutions

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

CHAIR - Jack Fatica, Terra #4719
Johnny Bollin, Berea #1699
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STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FOR-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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4 **WHEREAS** the for-profit sector of higher education has seen explosive growth in the last
5 decade—while overall postsecondary enrollment increased 31 percent between 1998 and
6 2008, for-profit postsecondary enrollment has increased 225 percent during the same time
7 period; and

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9 **WHEREAS** for-profit institutions of higher education have increased their share of all
10 undergraduates enrolled in higher education from 2 percent in 1990 to 8 percent in 2007
11 and nearly 10 percent today; and

12
13 **WHEREAS** in 2007-08, students at for-profit colleges and universities drew 21 percent of
14 all Pell grants, even though they only comprised 8 percent of undergraduate enrollments;
15 and

16
17 **WHEREAS** the average cost of attending a for-profit institution is twice as much as in-state
18 tuition at public four-year institutions and more than five times as much at public two-year
19 institutions; and

20
21 **WHEREAS** students at for-profit institutions borrow the most for their education, with
22 nearly 30 percent of students borrowing at least \$40,000; and

23
24 **WHEREAS** according to the College Board, the average debt load of bachelor degree
25 recipients at for-profit institutions was \$32,653 in 2007-08 as compared with \$22,375 at
26 private, not-for-profit institutions and \$17,700 at public four-year institutions; and for two-
27 year degree recipients, the average debt load for those who attended for-profit institutions
28 was \$18,783, as compared with \$7,125 at public two-year institutions; and

29
30 **WHEREAS** the for-profit education industry has recently been compared to the subprime
31 mortgage industry, with the potential of saddling a new generation with student loan debt
32 they can never afford to pay back; and

33
34 **WHEREAS one in five for-profit school students default on their federal loans—44 percent**
35 **of all defaulters attended for-profit institutions, even though just 8 percent of all students**
36 **attend for-profit schools; and**

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38 **WHEREAS some for-profit institutions have invested as much as 20 percent of their**
39 **operating budgets in aggressive marketing campaigns that target and recruit low-income**
40 **students; and**

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42 **WHEREAS there are many instances of improper conduct on the part of for-profit**
43 **institutions, including targeting homeless shelters in their recruitment efforts, paying \$78.5**
44 **million to settle a whistleblower False Claim Act lawsuit and paying another \$9.8 million to**
45 **the Department of Education to resolve claims of paying improper incentive compensation**
46 **to its recruiters; and**

47
48 **WHEREAS there have been several cases in which for-profit institutions have purchased**
49 **financially insolvent institutions of higher education and are awarded accredited status**
50 **without having to undergo the normal accreditation process, thereby shielding the quality**
51 **of their educational offerings from professional and public scrutiny; and**

52
53 **WHEREAS the for-profit education business model typically relies on largely contingent, at-**
54 **will workforce that has little to no job security, academic freedom, or voice in institutional**
55 **decision-making; and**

56
57 **WHEREAS the AFT has long played a leading role working with other organizations to**
58 **ensure that federal legislation and regulations limit fraud and abuse in the for-profit sector**
59 **and provide greater protection from high-pressure and deceptive sales tactics for**
60 **educational programs of little or no benefit to them; and**

61
62 **WHEREAS regulations currently under consideration by the U.S. Department of Education**
63 **would clarify and strengthen the prohibition on paying “incentive compensation” to**
64 **student recruiters and define “gainful employment” in a way that is measurable,**
65 **enforceable and protects students from incurring excessive student loan debt; therefore**

66
67 **BE IT RESOLVED that the OHIO Federation of Teachers redouble its efforts to monitor and**
68 **disseminate information about the practices of for-profit institutions of higher education as**
69 **well as the impact of those practices on students, both educationally and financially; and**
70

71 **BE IT RESOLVED that the OFT gather information about best regulatory practice and**
72 **advocate for legislation and regulations that safeguard the educational and financial**
73 **success of students at for-profit institutions, particularly regulations that ensure such**
74 **students achieve their educational goals without incurring insurmountable debt in relation**
75 **to their future employment; and**

76
77 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the OFT advocate for a more transparent and quality-
78 driven accreditation process for for-profit institutions, particularly in terms of preventing
79 such institutions from “purchasing” the accreditation that was previously awarded to a
80 public or private nonprofit institution; and

81
82 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the practices that protect excellence in higher education—a
83 corps of full-time tenure, due process, academic freedom, shared freedom—be extended to
84 these kinds of institution, along with the benefits of unionization.

85
86 **PREPARING STUDENTS AND WORKERS FOR GOOD JOBS AND REWARDING PUBLIC**
87 **AND PRIVATE SECTOR CAREERS IN A GREEN ECONOMY**

88
89 **WHEREAS** the Ohio Federation of Teachers has policy that enunciates our continued strong
90 support of initiatives to strengthen career and technical education; and

91
92 **WHEREAS** the OFT is committed to advancing the cause of good green jobs through our
93 participation and support of the AFL-CIO’s Center for Green Jobs; and

94
95 **WHEREAS** the OFT has made clear a position of support in expanding educational
96 opportunities that address environmental sustainability, climate change and more sound
97 environmental policies; and

98
99 **WHEREAS** the economic recovery priorities of the Obama administration are closely linked
100 to promoting the creation of more green jobs and the use of clean energy as evidenced by
101 the appointment of a White House advisor on green jobs, enterprise and innovation; and

102
103 **WHEREAS** our members in K-12 and higher education, who will be expected to prepare
104 students for the new green economy, feel they have not been consistently and actively
105 involved in local, state and national initiatives on green workforce development, as they
106 should be; and

107
108 **WHEREAS** nearly half of AFT members live and/or work serving students and the public in
109 urban areas, which are a special focus of green job development; and

110
111 **WHEREAS** our members in education and public employment can bring unique expertise
112 and experience to the discussion and work necessary to prepare the current and future
113 workforce for jobs and careers in a green economy; and

114
115 **WHEREAS** the OFT is in the position to be a convener of influential allies and partner
116 organizations with whom we have strong relationships to join the effort to promote the
117 development of an education and local/state government infrastructure to support green
118 jobs; therefore

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120 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the OFT create a committee to provide our affiliates with information
121 and research to support their efforts to ensure genuine involvement of our members in K-

122 12 and higher education, particularly those in community and technical colleges, in the
123 development of curriculum and programs to prepare and support students—youth and
124 adults—for careers in our emerging green economy; and

125
126 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the OFT urge coordinated state and local efforts and policies that
127 assure adequate professional development in green technologies for career-technical
128 teachers and instructors, beginning with establishing criteria for career-technical
129 professional development through the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor and Energy;
130 and

131
132 **BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED**, that the OFT support state legislative efforts that enable the
133 expansion of institutions of higher education as centers of research in green economy-
134 related fields; and

135
136 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the OFT support the development of federal, state and local
137 legislation or policies and safeguards that ensure “green” businesses that receive tax cuts
138 or incentives actually live up to their promises of worker training and the creation of new
139 and meaningful opportunities for employment in the emerging green economy.

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141

142 **IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**
143 **PROGRAMS**

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145 **WHEREAS** the nation is undergoing a profound workforce transformation due to rapid
146 technological changes and growing financial demands in the global economy that require a
147 highly skilled workforce in order for industries to maintain a competitive edge; and

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149 **WHEREAS** the growing demand for high-skill jobs has led to a significant need to upgrade
150 the skills of the American workforce even as employment has declined; and

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152 **WHEREAS** quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across the nation
153 provide more than one million students and adults in school systems with technical and
154 academic skills that make them more employable and more suited for community and
155 technical college opportunities and direct entry into the workforce; and

156

157 **WHEREAS** CTE programs allow students to explore otherwise unknown career options and
158 opportunities; and

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160 **WHEREAS** CTE programs can improve student achievement through the integration of
161 academic technical curricula that serve to enhance the rigor of the curriculum and its
162 relevance to students' lives; and

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164 **WHEREAS** traditional CTE schools are uniquely designed to provide students with rigorous
165 programs of study in key fields that cannot be easily replicated; and

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167 **WHEREAS** many CTE schools and programs lack the resources and supports for equipment,

168 curriculum development, internships, externships and professional development needed to
169 keep pace with an ever-changing technological world due to a lack of federal, state and
170 local funding; therefore

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172 BE IT RESOLVED that the Ohio Federation of Teachers recognize the profound
173 transformation of our workforce and encourage the expansion of CTE programs in school
174 systems throughout Ohio as they continue to support community and technical colleges;
175 and

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177 BE IT RESOLVED that the OFT encourage state and local affiliates to facilitate the
178 coordination of CTE programs with industry and higher education partners, local labor
179 unions and other CTE associations to provide educators with suitable curricula,
180 professional development and resources in order to give students viable skills and more
181 real life experience.

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184 **SUPPORT FREE ACCESS TO A NATIONAL LIBRARY OF DIGITIZED RESOURCES**

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186 WHEREAS free and public libraries and unencumbered access to libraries have been a
187 cornerstone of public education, and all education, throughout history; and

188
189 WHEREAS new technologies have allowed for the digitization of information, including
190 public domain educational resources such as out-of-publication books, "orphan" books and
191 other publications and creative materials that have been or currently are free in libraries;
192 and

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194 WHEREAS Google Inc. has led the effort in the digitization of resources that are of major
195 importance and are currently accessible for free, by students and educators, through their
196 proprietary Google Books Library Project; and

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198 WHEREAS major nations, educational institutions, writers, artists, authors and the general
199 public have expressed concern for the privatization and commercialization of educational
200 and creative resources by Google Inc.; and

201
202 WHEREAS Google Inc. is actively working to create and impose a legal framework that
203 would allow for the privatization and commercialization of educational resources;
204 therefore

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206 BE IT RESOLVED that the Ohio Federation of Teachers publicize the idea for allowing free
207 access to all educational materials currently or recently digitized by Google Inc. for royalty-
208 free use by educators, Pre- K - 12 and higher education students, public educational
209 institutions and librarians; and

210
211 BE IT RESOLVED that the OFT support efforts to create a national library for digitized
212 resources that are free and open for public access and use.