

FACT SHEET

What is the California Federation of Teachers?

- The California Federation of Teachers is a union of professionals affiliated with the more than 1.7 million member American Federation of Teachers, and through it with the AFL-CIO.
- The CFT comprises the state's 145 local unions chartered by the AFT. Each local is affiliated with its regional AFL-CIO Central Labor Council and the California Labor Federation.
- Through its local unions, the CFT represents more than 120,000 educational employees working at every level of public and private education from Head Start to the University of California.
- In all segments of education, the CFT is committed to promoting high-quality education and to securing the conditions necessary to provide the best services to California's students.

Why is there a CFT?

- The CFT was founded in 1919 to provide a labor union alternative for classroom teachers. To gain employee rights taken for granted by other workers, CFT lawyers and courageous teachers tested the courts again and again, building a strong body of case law. One observer said, "The AFT in California is responsible for having won 90 percent of the cases dealing with teachers' rights during the 1960s."
- To provide essential workplace rights, the CFT in 1953 introduced the first teachers' collective bargaining bill in the California Legislature. It reintroduced similar bills for the following two decades, until passage of the Educational Employment Relations Act in 1975 finally brought collective bargaining rights to K-14 teachers and classified employees working in public education. Since then CFT has represented these employees in professional and employment-related matters.

■ Three years later, in 1978, CFT helped pass the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act, bringing the benefits of collective bargaining to university employees. Today the CFT represents lecturers and librarians at the University of California.

What has CFT achieved?

- **PRE-K AND K-12 TEACHERS** The CFT leads the state's movement for quality education based on high academic standards for both students and teachers. Through the collective bargaining contract, AFT unions became trailblazers in establishing successful peer assistance and review programs, and other professional development, still in place today. CFT works to secure universal preschool for all California children as well as lifelong learning for adults.
- **CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES AND PARAPROFESSIONALS** The union works to ensure that classified employees are recognized for the valuable work they perform. CFT believes the work of qualified school and college support staff is essential to building strong campus communities and enhanced student learning.
- **COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY** Representing a majority of faculty in California, the CFT supports a strong core of full-time faculty and seeks to reach the system goal of having 75 percent full-time and 25 percent part-time faculty. To better the working conditions of more than 30,000 part-time faculty, CFT has worked in coalition to win equity funding to boost salaries. The CFT continues to seek legislation that will end the exploitation of part-time instructors.
- **UC LIBRARIANS AND LECTURERS** The CFT represents world class librarians working at the University of California and has negotiated one of the best contracts in the nation for non-tenured faculty.
- **PRIVATE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF** The CFT organizes education workers at private schools and colleges, Head Start, and job training centers who need a union on their side to secure the most basic employee rights.

Representing faculty and classified workers in public and private schools and colleges, from early childhood through higher education.

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DIVISION PRESIDENTS

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Early Childhood/TK-12 Council

Carl Williams
Council of Classified Employees

Jim Mahler Community College Council

Mia McIver University Council-AFT

John Perez Council of Retired Members

AFT VICE PRESIDENTS

Alex Caputo-Pearl UTLA

Jeffery M. Freitas CFT President

Who are the CFT's elected officers?



JEFFERY M. FREITAS, a credentialed secondary math teacher, was elected CFT President in 2019. He has advocated on behalf of members for nearly two decades as president of the Carpinteria Association of United School Employees, AFT Local 2216, as elected CFT Secretary Treasurer for eight years, and prior to that, as field representative and lobbyist for the Federation.



LUUKIA SMITH, an accounting technician, serves as CFT Secretary Treasurer. She is former president of the CFT Council of Classified Employees and the El Camino Classified Employees, AFT Local 6142. She led the union for 16 years representing staff at the Torrance college where she worked for more than 30 years.



L. LACY BARNES, an instructor of psychology at Reedley College is the Senior Vice President of CFT. Barnes, who holds a doctorate, is former president of the State Center Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1533, representing faculty at Reedley and Fresno City Colleges in the Central Valley.



RICO TAMAYO, an elementary school teacher of more than 20 years, heads the CFT Early Childhood/TK-12 Council which represents educators preschool through high school. Tamayo is former president of the El Rancho Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 3467, in Pico Rivera.



CARL WILLIAMS is president of the CFT Council of Classified Employees, the division of support staff and paraprofessionals. Williams has led the Lawndale Federation of Classified Employees, AFT Local 4529, for 11 years representing staff in the Los Angeles County elementary district where he has worked for 25 years and is a senior custodian.



JIM MAHLER is president of the CFT Community College Council and leader of the AFT Guild, San Diego and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community Colleges, Local 1931. Mahler serves on the executive board of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council and teaches engineering, math and physics in the San Diego district.



MIA MCIVER is a lecturer of writing and literature at UCLA, where she also served members as president of the UCLA Faculty Union, Local 1990. She leads the CFT's University Council, which advocates on behalf of non-tenure-track faculty and librarians at University of California campuses.



JOHN PEREZ is president of the CFT Council of Retired Members. Perez was a high school social studies teacher in Los Angeles and served as both a vice president and president of United Teachers Los Angeles before his retirement in 2005. Currently he is president of UTLA-Retired, Local 1021-R.

How does the CFT work?

- The highest political body of the CFT is its biennial Convention. At the Convention, hundreds of delegates elected in local unions throughout the state debate and decide issues facing the organization. Delegates also elect the CFT President, Secretary Treasurer, and 24 Vice Presidents.

- Between Conventions, the State Council, to which all local unions may send delegates, makes decisions for the CFT. Between these meetings, the Executive Council, comprising the officers of the CFT, makes decisions for the Federation.

- At State Council and Executive Council, the CFT Committee on Political Education (COPE) reviews ballot propositions and political candidates and their positions on issues. Through COPE, the CFT participates in the campaigns of endorsed candidates.

- Four CFT division councils correspond to the major groups of education employees: EC/TK-12, Classified, Community College, University. Retirees also have a division. The councils meet quarterly to share information and formulate policy proposals for the CFT governing bodies. Council officers are elected by their constituent local unions.

Where can the CFT be found?

- AFT local unions can be found from Del Norte County in the north to San Diego in the south. Many locals employ their own staff.

- The CFT's officers and staff work at larger offices in Berkeley, Burbank and Sacramento and field offices in Costa Mesa, Fresno, Oxnard and Petaluma.