



AFT Connecticut
A Union of Professionals

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NBFT SPOTLIGHT

Welcome back message

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone had a restful and fulfilling summer break and had an opportunity to spend time with loved ones, recharge your battery, and appreciate the simple things in life. It was great to see you at convocation and to see the newest members of the NBFT family.

This will be a new year of fact finding, as we are in new territory. Many changes are upon us, including a new Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, administrative and staffing changes, block scheduling at the high school, the end of ESSER funds, and the anti-Union animus I addressed in a previous email. Once again we will be asked to go above and beyond as our students return to our buildings. We will also be working for a new administration who do not have an inside familiarity with the institutional collective history of our schools. I look forward to representing you and bringing our shared concerns to Dr. Gasper for open and honest communication. This includes the results of last year's *End of the Year* survey. As you know from my previous emails, I am a passionate advocate in both the individual and group sense. **We** are *the Union* acting **together** to advocate on behalf of professional standards and working conditions. Providing evidence and data to support our concerns and claims regarding safety, teacher evaluations, teacher retention, administrative practices, and working conditions are crucial to our success as a district.

As you are aware, our new contract started July 1. Knowledge of its contents is the best way to know and protect your rights. Strength and unity of 871 benefits all of us. Your contract can be found here:

https://www.nbft.net/files/ugd/94c906_f2a3d12a9c44409ab6a096956e1d65b8.pdf

<https://www.csdnb.org/pdf/Talent/Contracts/Local-871-Contract-2022-2025.pdf>

Please remember “**control + F**” will help you find specific information using key words/terms. If you cannot find the answer to a question you are looking for, please reach out to your building rep first. They will reach out to the grade level Vice President if the issue remains unresolved, and if needed, the issue will be addressed at our monthly meeting with the Superintendent’s cabinet. In addition to email, your VPs can be reached via dedicated mobile numbers printed in the Spotlight. I encourage you to be an active participant in our Union. All membership meetings this year will be virtual to maximize participation and flexibility for you. Our first meeting will be on September 13th.

Thank you for being an integral force in our students’ lives and the lives of your colleagues. This job is not easy; in fact the enormity of tasks and never-ending and added responsibilities are making this profession untenable for many. With the shortages in our field in the aftermath of Covid, we are seeing an unprecedented nationwide exodus of teachers. I am a firm believer that you must put yourself first. Self-care, self-awareness, work-life balance, and setting boundaries are things I value in my own life and prioritize. I hope that when times of stress creep into your life, you reach out to those around you for support and encouragement. Our district offers **EAP** as well. Please remember to put yourself first, know your worth, and realize that you are not alone! The work you do matters and it is noticed. On behalf of the Union Leadership team, best wishes for a wonderful school year.

Sincerely,

Sue

PS Tomorrow, September 1st, participating Dunkin’ locations are giving free medium hot or iced coffee to teachers to celebrate the new school year. Just show your ID!

Teachers and Paraeducators Collaborations



Daniel Flores is a former 2x Paraeducator of the year, 2014 Holmes Elementary, and 2016 District Finalist Pulaski Middle School. He currently serves as the lead Key Teacher for the Key Program at Slade Middle School. Being a former President and Vice President for Local 2407 New Britain Federation of Paraeducators, he has participated in some teacher-para incidents where conflict resolutions & collaborations were needed to help improve the teacher-para professions.

Daniel Blanchard is an award-winning educator, author, speaker, and TV host. He teaches special education and social studies at Brookside School in New Britain. And he also serves as the New Britain Federation of Teachers (NBFT) executive secretary. Furthermore, Dan is a Legislative Political Action Committee member for the American Federation of Teachers (AFT-CT). Dan has been on multiple speaking tours for the AFT and other educational organizations.

Teachers and Paraeducators Collaborations

Updates:

Dan Blanchard and Dan Flores have been working on a new professional development book for educators. They have teamed up with Dede Rittman- a fellow educator and author from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Their new book will share best practices for professional development and how it impacts our educational professions. They have researched a wide range of themes that affect how educators perform in the classroom. Teachers, paraeducators, and other professionals who work in public schools will benefit from their soon-to-be-released professional development book. This is Dan Flores and Dan Blanchard's second book together. Their previous book is **A Conversation on Education: How Teachers and Paraeducators can Work Better Together**. Their first book is on amazon. Click on the link below to check them out. Their book has received enough attention to land them an authors' event at the University of Hartford in October for a book party. More information on this author's event will follow.

A previous book written by Dan Blanchard called, **Evaluation of Professional Development in an Urban High School- 2nd Edition: Making Educator PD Better** compliments well the work Dan and Dan are doing on their professional development book. As usual, Dan and Dan are planning on presenting at the annual Teacher-Para Collaboration workshop for AFT-CT in Rocky Hill. These workshops are always good PD for teachers and paras. If you require some extra CEUs for your T-EVAL, please stop by. Dinner will be provided.

Below is a preview of some of the educational experts who will be in Dan and Dan's PD book:

Scott Rossingol- School Principal and Author

"PD for teachers needs to be relevant to their current practice in some manner to be perceived as meaningful."

Dr. Michael Litke- School Principal

"Professional development that lends itself to continuous growth and learning is critical to any successful school."

Elise I. Geary- KHS Principal

"PD should be followed up with feedback from the teachers once they have had time to implement the new learning in their classrooms."

Teachers and Paraeducators Collaborations

Since 2017, Dan Flores and Dan Blanchard have worked together on providing the Teacher-Para professional developments for the American Federation of Teachers of Connecticut (AFT-CT). They have recently also offered this PD for the Hartford School District for their paraeducator workforce and emerging college students for the University of Hartford.

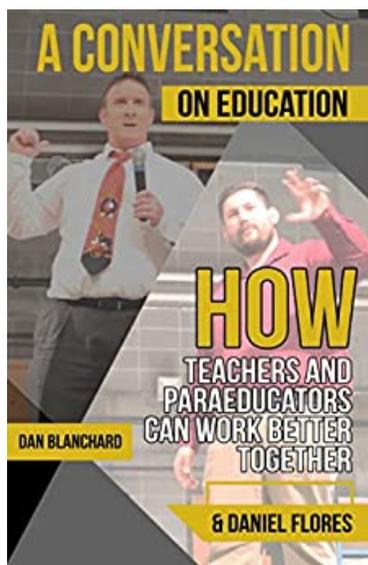
Please feel free to reach out to them if you have questions about the book, what the journey has been like, or want to discuss what you think about teachers and paraeducators working together.

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[Teacher & Para Collaboration AFT-CT Small Video Workshop](#)

Their book, *A Conversation on Education: How teachers and paraeducators can work better together*, is based on relevant research from school districts and locals, personal testimonies from those in the field (teachers & paras), and up-to-date work practices. The book is for the working person and those who want keen insight into the day-to-day operations of teachers and paras working together. Take a free peek inside their



[Amazon A Conversation on Education](#)

Teachers and Paraeducators Collaborations

Despite ongoing professional development for urban educators, many inner city school students are still not performing on high levels or even grade levels.

In this professional development book, bestselling author Daniel Blanchard offers a practical guide to helping school administration understand and overcome the inherent difficulties of transferring expertise from the experts, through the teachers, and into the students in a meaningful way that demonstrates student learning.

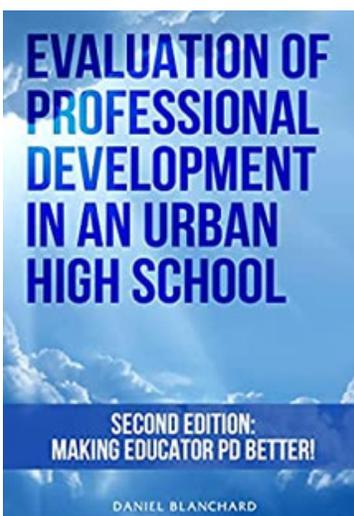
The Evaluation of Professional Development in an Urban High School reviews the literature on the characteristics of effective schools, various professional development models, and their impact. This book offers a wealth of practical tools for schools to transform their professional development.

This PD book is ideal for educational leaders and administrators, professional development facilitators, coaches, positional leaders, department heads, and college training programs. Enjoy this invaluable resource offering concrete strategies for all educators who want to improve their craft and their students' learning.

Dr. Greg Goins Illinois School Superintendent

Host of the Goin'Digital Podcast Show for K-12 School Leaders

"Daniel Blanchard has emerged as a leading voice in public education."



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[Evaluation of Professional Development in an Urban High School](#)



Children's Enrichment Fund

- Do you want to support the children of New Britain in times of need?
- Please consider donating as little as the cost of a cup of coffee a week. The children's enrichment fund last year for example helped one of our student's family who lost everything in a house fire.

Two ways to sign up

Paper Card

Get a card from your union rep and fill it out. Then interoffice to payroll.

Electronic signup

- Click on the link below.
- Print the application.
- Fill out the form.
- Scan using copier and email it to yourself.
- Forward scanned PDF attachment from your district email account and email it to payroll@csdnb.org

**[Click here to sign up to support the
Children's Enrichment Fund](#)**



Scholarships



1. AFT Connecticut Scholarships *Application Deadline: Not yet set*

The AFT Connecticut Scholarship Selection Committee awards two \$2,500.00 scholarships each year:

- The first scholarship is the George C. Springer Scholarship is for AFT Connecticut members
- The AFT Connecticut Scholarship is for members' spouses or domestic partners or children of members.

2. AFT Porter Scholars Program - *Application Deadline: March 31, 2023*

This program offers four-year, \$8,000.00 post-secondary scholarships to students who are dependents of AFT members, as well as one-time \$1,000.00 grants to AFT members.

3. Union Plus Scholarships - *Application Deadline: January 31, 2023*

Amounts range from \$500.00 to \$4,000.00, and these one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall each year.

[Click here for more information and how to apply.](#)

2022-2023 NBFT Membership Meetings

- September 13
- October 11
- December 20
- February 14
- March 14
- May 9

***All membership meetings are on zoom.**



NBFT Welfare Report

Due to unforeseen circumstances the welfare report from the summer will be published in the October issue of the spotlight.

