

In Two Cities, Weingarten Highlights Community Schools

During visits to Cincinnati and Charleston, W.Va., AFT president Randi Weingarten highlighted the promise of community schools as a way to provide children and their families with an array of wraparound services that can help students succeed. In [Cincinnati on Sept. 6 and 7](#), Weingarten toured a school that is part of the city's innovative community schools program, discussed education reform in meetings with business and civic leaders, and joined thousands of working people at the annual Labor Day Picnic sponsored by the Cincinnati AFL-CIO Labor Council. The school she visited, the Ethel M. Taylor Academy, offers students and their families access to a public health clinic, mental health services, academic tutoring and counseling, after-school programs, and many recreational activities. "Cincinnati could be a model for the rest of the country," she said of the district's focus on community schools. On [Sept. 8 in Charleston](#), Weingarten visited Stonewall Jackson Middle School, a leading candidate to become West Virginia's first state-funded community school. Not all community schools are the same, she said, "but they all have community backing, and that element already is in place at this school." After the school visit, Weingarten addressed a meeting of the state board of education, speaking about community schools as well as teacher evaluations, a subject of current interest in West Virginia, where the state's teacher evaluation system is undergoing a review.