

# With Harris, America's best days are ahead

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Never underestimate a public school teacher. Gov. Tim Walz declared those words as he accepted the vice presidential nomination. I know every teacher who heard him sit up straighter and said, darn right.

There's also been a lot of underestimating the Democratic nominee for president. But the energy around Vice President Kamala Harris and her candidacy has proved the doubters wrong at every step, and the electricity we felt at this week's Democratic convention was palpable.

That's because Harris and Walz offer a bold vision for our nation's future, one grounded in opportunity, freedom and the promise of America for all—for working people, retirees, people struggling and people striving, and as was clear over and over at last week's convention, for our children and their future.

One of the first lessons I taught my high school students was about the social contract—how both individual freedoms and mutual responsibility are essential in our democracy. Harris and Walz get that at their core.

They are committed to improving the lives of people and upholding personal freedoms like the freedom to join a union, the freedom to make very personal decisions about reproductive care and other healthcare, the freedom to vote, the freedom from gun violence, and the freedom that allows every person the opportunity to get ahead.

And they're also committed to upholding opportunity for all, a foundational American value, by investing in great public schools; providing access to affordable housing and college, and decent healthcare; going after price gouging and bringing down prescription drug costs; ensuring families can afford child care and a home; and strengthening Social Security and Medicare.

I'm proud of what I taught my students, but I remain in awe of what they taught me. One of their first lessons was that you have to walk the walk. And Harris and Walz have spent their lives walking the walk and fighting for the promise of America and a better life for all, in the classroom, in the courtroom, on the football field and in public office.

While Harris and Walz fight for the people, former President Donald Trump and Sen. JD Vance fight for themselves. They continue to spew a litany of dystopian cruelty and crudeness in an attempt to divide Americans.

## Never underestimate a public school teacher

And their extreme policy agenda, Project 2025, would eliminate personal freedoms, gut public schools, kill unions, take away healthcare, and shower billionaires with more tax cuts. Trump is proud of and takes full responsibility for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and supports a national abortion ban. He brags about being a dictator on day one and praises autocrats over U.S. allies.

That's no vision for the future. It's not helping America's families. It's just helping the Trump family.

This election is about whether we build a future of opportunity and economic dignity for all, or get dragged into a past of chaos, fear and hate. It's about whether the promise of America will continue to promote the common good, recognizing that the strength of our nation lies in caring for each other, being our neighbors' keepers, and lifting each other up rather than dividing us and pulling us apart.

That's what the 1.8 million educators, health-care professionals and public employees who are AFT members do every day. We bring people together. We promote opportunity and help children and communities thrive. Even this week, as some look to ban books, AFT members gave out 40,000 books to families at the Chicago Teachers Union Summer Jam event before the Democratic convention.

The AFT has 600,000 members and their households in the battleground states where this election will be won or lost. They make a difference in the lives of people every day, and they understand the stakes of this election. AFT members are all in because we, like most Americans, believe in the promise of our great nation and that progress is possible, but only if we act.

With Kamala Harris as our president, America's best days are ahead. Let's not underestimate those who strive to build a better future.

Let's build that future together.



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Randi Weingarten, AFT president, speaking at the DNC 2024 in Chicago on Aug. 22.

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