Amplifying Our Voice: Leading Boldly for Our Students, Our Professions, and Our Union

The EmPOWERed Union Leader
How to Revitalize and Renew Your Membership

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Competency: Governance and Leadership

NEA Leadership Competency Progression Levels

*Level 1: Foundational*
- Increases leadership skills
- Active listening skills
- Facilitation skills

*Level 2: Mobilizing and Power Building*
- Effective communication
- Base knowledge of union rights and critical information
- Mapping your building for effective communication
NEA Strategic Goals and NEA Organizational Priorities

- NEA Strategic Goals 1 and 2:
  - Strategic Goal 1: Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment
  - Strategic Goal 2: Empowered Educators for Successful Students

- NEA Organizational Priority
  - Early Career Educators
  - Every Student Succeeds Act
  - My School, My Voice
Your Roles...

Building Rep as Organizer

Building Rep as Communicator

Building Rep as Advocate
How do we do this?
BUILDING REP AS ORGANIZER
What does an organizer do?

• Builds Involvement

• Acts as Talent Scout - Develops other advocates and leaders

• Facilitates communication throughout the organization
Building Rep as Communicator
How do you communicate with members in your building?

Through Charting:

• One-on-one conversations
• Email
• Telephone
• 10 Minute Meetings
• Text Messages
• Facebook/Social Media
• Flyers/Leaflets
Every good conversation starts with listening

• Active Listening
• Take Notes
• Where does the information go?
  • FAC
  • President
  • Grievance Chair
  • Administration
• Relationship with Administration
COMMUNICATION CYCLE

- Week 1: 10 Minute Meeting
- Week 2: Reconnaissance
- Week 3: Communication
- Week 4: Report Out
- Conduit for Communication

- Simple Agenda
  - Old Business
  - New Business (Use a Summary Sheet)
  - Open Discussion/Prioritization

Get Representatives from Departments/Grade Levels/Hallways
Individual Member Issues

Concerns

Problems

Issues

Contractual Issues

Building Culture Issues
• Get the facts
• Get members involved
• Talk with grievance chair
• Have member “experts” prepared to discuss issues
• Issues Worksheet
The issue will dictate whom you speak with first.

**Meeting w/ Principal**
- Don’t meet alone
- Have all relevant facts
- Have possible solutions ready
- Have a note taker
- Bring the “experts”

**Association Meetings**
- Share details
- Be ready for suggestions
Week 4  • Report Out

• Update the info sheets

• Share the results with the members

• Caution on confidentiality
Building Rep as Advocate
Publicly support the local association and its members

• **As advocates, our job is to:**
  • Always Defend, Never Judge
  • Give SOUND advice
    • But ask for help
    • Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

It is a violation of the law to refuse to fairly represent a bargaining unit member in a matter involving the contract.
Weingarten Rights

• If you have reason to believe that you might be disciplined, you have the right to union representation:
  • Investigatory interviews when your supervisor is seeking to elicit facts
  • Your supervisor requests a written statement or written answers
  • Meetings or discussions when the supervisor has not yet decided to discipline you and is still seeking information
Legal Rights, Responsibilities and Protection

• PTS and other Just Cause
• Suspension of school employees
• Discrimination and Sexual Harassment
• Social Media and use of email
• 51A reporting obligations
• Fair Labor Standards Act
• Parental Leave
• Free Speech
What to do If?

• Table conversations on sample scenarios

• Questions and solutions
Session Outcomes

• The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

  • Train your districts union representatives

  • Establish greater communication within your union membership

  • Develop greater participation and growth of union members and activists
Thank you for attending!

Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session on your NEA Summit Mobile App!

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