Unite, Inspire, Lead
Our Students, Our Union, Our Future

Organizing for Power

Maralyn O’Brien & Michael Schoettle
NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority:

• **NEA Strategic Goal**

  *Core Function #2*

  In partnership with state and local affiliates, parents, and communities, NEA will organize to grow and strengthen our Association at all levels in order to improve student outcomes, secure the proper teaching and learning conditions, and achieve educational opportunity and equity for all students.

• **NEA Organizational Priority**

  Organizing
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<th>Competency Theme</th>
<th>Level 1: Foundational</th>
<th>Level 2: Mobilizing &amp; Power Building</th>
<th>Level 3: Agenda Driving</th>
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<tr>
<td>Utilizes organizing best practices</td>
<td>Understands the theory and best practices associated with organizing</td>
<td>Develops a successful campaign using organizing skills to engage members in key issues</td>
<td>Evaluates campaign strategies to continually improve the impact of future campaigns and organizing approaches</td>
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<td>Builds meaningful community partnerships</td>
<td>Engages different and diverse audiences in the community to identify common issues</td>
<td>Collaborates with different and diverse community audiences, and educates them on key issues</td>
<td>Transforms the relationship with the community to harness the power of collective action</td>
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<td>Makes strategic plans that rely on data and analysis</td>
<td>Analyzes and compiles reliable research data to formulate organizing strategies</td>
<td>Utilizes valid data to formulate a foundation for long term plans including objectives, strategies and goals</td>
<td>Implements strategic plans to increase membership and support key objectives</td>
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<td>Engages in collective action to identify and address pivotal issues</td>
<td>Identifies and engages in high impact and actionable organizing opportunities</td>
<td>Rallies others around key organizing opportunities by appealing to member passions and interests</td>
<td>Makes organizing on key issues more systematic and process driven, to improve their impact</td>
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<td>Creates conditions for continuous association growth and strength</td>
<td>Understands processes and strategies for member recruitment and retention</td>
<td>Develops imaginative recruitment and retention strategies that grow the association's membership and influence others to become more actively involved in the talent management process</td>
<td>Influences members to own the agenda of the association through their active participation and attitude towards collective action</td>
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<td>Fosters the development of leaders at all levels of the organization</td>
<td>Identifies and engages emerging association leaders who reflect our diversity</td>
<td>Mentors emerging leaders and encourages them to put plans in place to accelerate their level of participation</td>
<td>Advocates for new and diverse member strategies and actively supports leadership succession planning</td>
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2017 NEA National Leadership Summit | February 24-26, 2017
COMPETENCY: Organizing

- Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building
- Level 3: Agenda Driving

NEA Leadership Competency themes

- Engage members in key issues
- Recruitment and retention strategies to grow the association’s membership and influence
- Implements strategic plans
- Influences members to own the agenda of the association
Ask an Educator: National Listening Tour

• What does it mean to participate in the Winter Listening & Engagement Tour?
• Why are we organizing?
• Have we previously identified issues that animate our educators?
• What are these issues?
• Do we have a LEA campaign plan based on identified issues?
• What are your LEA’s goal(s) and how can the WLET support these goals?
Sign Up!

**TRACK 1**

Our Affiliate seeks to join one of the following National Strategic Campaigns (check all that apply):

- ESSA Implementation
- ESP Organizing
- Social and Economic Justice
- Community Schools
- Aspiring Educators (Student Program)
- Higher Ed Organizing
- New Educator Engagement
- Testing (Time to Teach, Time to Learn)
- Degrees Not Debt (Student Debt)
- School Board Elections

**TRACK 2**

Our Affiliate wants to design their own campaign with the help of a Regional Organizer based on a local or state issue:

The NEA's Center for Organizing (C40) Staff can assist with designing the above programs to engage, organize, mobilize, and educate your members and potential members in order to achieve the schools our students deserve.

**TRACK 3**

Our Affiliates want to listen to educators to learn what issues they want our Affiliate to act on:

The C40 staff will assist local and state association leadership in designing and facilitating campaigns tailored to the specific issues and needs animating your educators that drive membership growth and engagement. Our team is prepared to assist in developing strategic campaign content and plans, including thoughtful data analytics and collection mechanisms, and trainings including but not limited to conducting one-on-one conversations.
Assessing Your Local

In determining goals:

• What is your membership number?
• How many schools do you represent?
• How many schools are without a worksite leader?
• What makes a school a priority target?
• What type of calendar needs to come together for January-March?
Setting Goals

**Important:** Goals are secondary to having robust and meaningful one-on-one conversations that identify issues.

- What is your growth goal?
- How many 1:1 conversations can you have?
- How many new leaders do you want to identify?
- What type of calendar needs to come together for January-March?
Launching Your LEA Listening Tour

• Who from your local needs to be involved to move this successfully?
• How do you provide skill development to this group?
• What materials are required?
• How does the local provide ongoing support?
• What support do you need/want from NEA HQ?
Ask an Educator: National Listening Tour

Key Organizing Tips

• Affiliates should engage educators at all levels and ensure that educators have ownership of the process;
• Approach the interaction as a conversation and not a formal interview;
• Guiding questions may be used by avoiding probing or leading statements;
• Let educators responses guide the conversation just like a normal conversation;
• Don’t use the conversation to answer your own theory;
• Don’t let the conversation become an opportunity for educators to say what they think you want to hear;
• Ask for further engagement in the association;
• Others?
Executing Your Listening Tour

So who should you talk to? How does this support your LEA goal?

- Make your goal to speak to as many people as possible: key worksite leaders, rank-and-file members, non-members, etc.
- How do we integrate existing member leaders (worksite leaders, building or site reps, etc.) into having these one-on-one conversations?
The 1:1 Conversation

What does a one-on-one conversation look like?

• Introduce yourself
• Ask permission to take notes and pictures
• Begin the conversation with guiding questions
• Focus on the conversation – engage sincerely
• Let the response guide the flow of the conversation
• Share your views and opinions and build on the knowledge you gain from other conversations

What’s the one thing you don’t want to forget?
Sample Conversation Starters

- What do you enjoy about teaching/your job?
- What takes the joys out of classroom and/or workplace?
- What would you like to see the Association organize around that brings joy back to your profession?
### Option 1: Email

If different cards are being used for ESP, Professional, and Higher Ed, sort the cards by job classification

1. Scan the cards grouped by above classification
2. Email the files to [listeningtour@nea.org](mailto:listeningtour@nea.org)
3. We will confirm receipt when the files have been placed in queue for processing.

### Option 2: USPS

If different cards are being used for ESP, Professional, and Higher Ed, sort the cards and scan them in groups of similar files. Mail the cards via USPS to:

**National Education Association**  
c/o Matt Bennet
1201 16th St NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Due to increased security measures on mail sent to DC, allow 1-2 weeks for delivery.
Make the Ask!

Based on your conversations and listening, what’s the appropriate ask?

- Join
- Recommit
- Agency Fee Conversion
- Volunteer for a Committee
- Come to a Meeting
- Become a Leader
Post Listening Tour Debrief

On March 31st, after 1:1s are completed, what’s next?

• What are the most common recurring themes and issues?
• What are some of the proposed solutions?
• Which worksite and issues did you consider to be outliers? Why?
• What steps will you take to organize around the identified issues?

Please share organizing stories with the Center for Organizing!
What did you learn? What steps are you taking next?
Contact Maralyn O’Brien at mobrien@nea.org.
2017 Calendar

What type of calendar needs to come together?

• February
• March
• Future dates? Post-WLET organizing?
National Listening Tour Resources

Center for Organizing WLET Support

https://www.nea.org/home/61473.htm

- National Listening Tour Resource Guide
- Local President Talking Points
- AR Training Module
- 1:1 Contact Card
- Listening Tour Note Sheets
- Monthly National Support Webinar
- Access to National Campaign Organizing Staff
- Sample Listening Tour Debrief Guide
- Data Targeting for Potential Member Recruitment
Ask an Educator: National Listening Tour

Questions and Answers

Follow-up questions should be emailed to: listeningtour@nea.org
Session Outcomes

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

- Increase member and non-member engagement;
- Identify educator issues;
- Use identified issues to build LEA campaign.
Thank you!

Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session!

Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment.