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

Everyone Needs a BUDDY

Molly Wassmuth
John Beck
Ohio Education Association
Indicate the NEA Leadership Competency your session addresses: Example – COMPETENCY: ADVOCACY

• Indicate all of the NEA Leadership Competency progression level(s).  
  -Example: Level 1: Foundational and Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

• Indicate all of the NEA Leadership Competency themes within the competency that your presentation is designed to address.  
  • -Example: Utilizes best practices in advocacy and political efforts  
  • -Example: Leads public education policy reform
Indicate the NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority your session addresses:

- NEA Strategic Goal
  - advancing opportunities that will identify, organize, and engage new and early career educators; amplify the voices of all educators, support our members’ professional growth, and promote social justice for our students, communities and our nation;
  - building the capacity of the local, state and national union to ensure the success of public education.

- NEA Organizational Priorities
  - Early Career Educator
Who doesn't need a buddy?

“The statistics for teacher turnover among new teachers are startling. Some 20 percent of all new hires leave the classroom within three years. In urban districts, the numbers are worse. Close to 50 percent of newcomers leave the profession during their first five years of teaching. See The High Cost of Teacher Turnover (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007)”

WHY???

- First year teachers are often overwhelmed and don’t know who to go to for help.
- Many first year teachers are not familiar with the workings of a union or may not be supportive of a union.

http://www.nea.org/tools/17054.htm
What is a Union Buddy?

• First and foremost a union buddy is a primary point of contact for any questions a first year teacher to the district may have.
• A union buddy is NOT an evaluator.
How did we implement Union Buddies in WEA
How did we implement Union Buddies in SEA

- The first step was reaching out to union members at each school where new teachers were starting. We wanted people that were committed to the union and were personable as well.
- Working with HR, we were able to identify new teachers through email, snail mail and phone. Everyone was sent an invitation to a pre first day get together for mentors and mentees.
- Mentors were given handouts to help with the process.
Does my association need a buddy?

How would this program work for your association?

Brainstorm 10-20 people you think would be able to help implement this program?

Any roadblocks or problems?

New member activities and engagements?
Keeping the buddy system going strong!
Gathering and Using Data

- After the first month, mentees were sent a survey to help us identify where strengths and weaknesses were in the program: https://goo.gl/forms/jCvYW4YuqgwSji1H3
- Building reps were then provided the survey results to follow up with individuals regarding any questions and concerns they had.
- Providing time for get togethers to informally debrief and answer questions.
Session Outcomes (Second to last slide)

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

• Learn about and set up a Union Buddy Program
• Build Capacity within your association for leadership
• Have a stronger and more involved association
Closing (Last slide)

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the NEA Summit Mobile App! (Allow at least 5 minutes at the end of the session.)

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