UNITING OUR MEMBERS AND THE NATION

Empowering leaders, educating students, strengthening communities

The Fight for Power: Unions vs the 1%

Maralyn O’Brien, NEA Center for Organizing
Organizing

• Level 1: Foundational
• Level 2: Mobilizing and Power Building

• **NEA Leadership Competency themes**
  – Analyzes and compiles reliable research to formulate organizing strategies
  – Collaborates with different and diverse community audiences, and educates them on key issues
  – Uses valid data to formulate a foundation for long term plans including objectives, strategies, and goals
  – Rallies others around key organizing opportunities by appealing to member passions and interests
NEA Strategic Goals & Organizational Priorities:

• NEA Strategic Goal
  – Strategic Goal 1: Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment
    • NEA will partner with state and local affiliates to strengthen their organizational capacity to: ...grow Association membership and strength while thwarting attacks on member rights and union strength.

• NEA Organizational Priority
  – Organizing
  – Advocacy
  – Racial Justice in Education
Concepts of Power

How do you define power?

Who has power?

Where do we get our power?
The Loss of Agency Fee

- By Constitution
- By Statute
Working Definition of Right to Work

Legislation, policies, or decisions that allow a person to work at any place without having to become a full member of the union or pay representation fees (fair share provisions).
“From now on, white women and white men will be forced into organizations with black African [...] whom they will have to call ’brother’ or lose their jobs.”

-Vince Muse, on why he founded Right to Work anti-labor laws
“In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans such as ‘right to work.’ It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
“[Tom McCabe said], “whatever you’re doing, stop what you’re doing and make sure the focus is on unions, defunding them, marginalizing them, dismantling them, all of that.”

— Anne Marie Gurney, May 26, 2015

“...three years ago we started thinking about this plan for public sector unions, going out and defunding the opposition, and trying to weaken them so we can try to get people elected that love freedom...”

— Scott Roberts, January 20, 2015, Yakima

“We need to fight unions. Because unions have corrupted our state, they have ensured that we’re the bluest state in the country.”

— Tom McCabe, January 8, 2015, Shelton
Unions and Shared Prosperity

Ties that bind
As union membership decreases, middle class income shrinks

Union Membership Rate
Middle class share of aggregate income

'67 '69 '71 '73 '75 '77 '79 '81 '83 '85 '87 '89 '91 '93 '95 '97 '99 '01 '03 '05 '07 '09

54 52 50 48 46 44
Threats

State

Federal

Judicial
"The fewer members it has the fewer potential members to organize an election."

Grover Norquist
@GroverNorquist

KY and MO passed Right to Work. Iowa Passed a version of Wisconsin's Act 10--much tougher. Orange is the New Black. Act 10 is the new RTW.

Paul Ryan
@PRyan

A secretary at a public high school in Lancaster, PA, said she was pleasantly surprised her pay went up $1.50 a week ... she said [that] will more than cover her Costco membership for the year.
Table Exercise

• What can we do to educate our members?
• Draw a cartoon about the actions you can take to raise awareness and call people to action.

Teams will present their ideas to the room.
Session Outcomes

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

– Take this presentation back to your board or worksite leader meetings
– Partner with other labor unions in your community to protect worker interests
– Connect new members to union values and inoculate against attacks
Closing

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the **NEA Summit Mobile APP**!

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