Divided We Fall, United We Thrive: Tips on How to Grow Your Own Community-Labor Coalition

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Session Overview

• This session includes Level 1: Foundational and Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

• NEA Leadership Competency themes covered in this session include:
  • Advocacy: Advances the cause of public education through advocacy for students [and their families and respective communities] including addressing racial and social justice in education and how it benefits our students and members’ professional needs and rights.
  • Organizing: Mobilizes, activates and engages members and leaders to support internal and external relationships and association capacity to: recruit, retain and identify diverse groups of members and leaders; and advance strategic priorities at the national, state, and local levels.
Session Overview Continued

• NEA Strategic Goals Addressed in this Session:
  • Advance 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.
  • Secure a pro-public education environment for students, educators, and families.
  • Build the capacity of the local, state and national union to ensure the success of public education.

• NEA Organizational Priorities:
  • This session focuses on Racial Justice in Education.
In 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution does recognize Same-Sex marriage. How was the major victory made possible?

• What was won?
• How was it won? What did it take? Think of the human, financial, social, political capital and resources that was needed to make this happen
• Why was the issue significant?
• Who was most affected by this issue?
If you want to go fast, go alone.

If you want to go far, go together.

- African proverb
The Minnesota Case
### The Minnesota Case

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<th>Why</th>
<th>How</th>
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<td>• Minnesota has the worst racial and economic disparities in the country</td>
<td>• Community Organizer assembled community-labor table with 4 (public education friendly) community organizations in 2014.</td>
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<td>• Disparities are reflected in every aspect of socio-political life such as our public schools</td>
<td>• Community-Labor Table could only agree to collaborate on education funding efforts at a state level.</td>
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<td>• Lack of representation of educators of color; Education Minnesota membership is over 70% White</td>
<td>• Coalition partners agreed to advance a funding agenda for:</td>
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<td>• School closures mainly occurred within low-income communities of color</td>
<td>• Universal Pre-K</td>
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<td>• Disproportionate rates of suspensions and expulsions of students of color</td>
<td>• Using a Mixed-Delivery Model (Added 2017)</td>
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<td>• Political and social climate was rich with anti-public education sentiments and initiatives</td>
<td>• Full-Service Community Schools</td>
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<td>• Had an anti-public education governors Tim Pawlenty that drastically cut education and early childhood funding.</td>
<td>• Free-Public College (added in 2017)</td>
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<td>• Education Reform Organizations increased in numbers and launched successful organizing efforts of high school and college students, parents of color, and early educators.</td>
<td>• Wins:</td>
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<td>• Education Minnesota was undergoing organizational shifts</td>
<td>• Secured more than $500,000 dollars for Full-Service Community Schools through state grant (2015-2016)</td>
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<td>• Move away from Business Union model to a Social Justice Model</td>
<td>• Defeated Pre-K Vouchers (2017)</td>
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<td>• Members of color challenged leadership to adopt anti-racist principles and organizing efforts</td>
<td>• Expanded funding (mostly through scholarships) for Pre-K programs (2017)</td>
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<td>• Members of Color created Education Minnesota’s Anti-racist and equity organizational plan, titled <strong>Affirmative Involvement Plan</strong></td>
<td>• Secured more than $2 million dollars for Full-Service Community Schools in Minneapolis (2018)</td>
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<td>• AIP generates (2) New (Organizing) positions created: Racial Equity Organizer and Community Organizer</td>
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Current Challenges

• Grow coalition’s capacity and bases to advance all 3 campaign priorities.
• Develop and maintain consensus amongst coalition partners around agenda priorities and goals.
• Identify strategic openings and sites to focus state and local campaign efforts.
• Identify and secure national and local resources to fund local initiatives.
• Build and strengthen relationships with non-profit childcare providers to advance a mixed delivery, universal public pre-K agenda.
• Build and strengthen relationships with higher education groups and organizations to advance a free-college agenda.
Moving Forward

• Growth:
  • 2 new community partners added.
  • Joined 2 national community-labor tables, AROS and Journey for Justice.
  • Collaborating with former rivals.

• Opportunities:
  • Form a parent-led coalition table with the help of journeys for justice
  • Advance a successful and progressive education funding agenda during this legislative session.
Break
Let’s BYOC: Build Your Own Coalition!

We will spend the 1.5 hour developing a community-labor coalition plan for your local and/or association. To do this we will conduct a:

1) Modified Issue Cut
2) SWOT Analysis
3) Power Map
Session Outcomes

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

• Foster and strengthen relationships with parents, students, and their respective community members and leaders.

• Collaborate with parents, students, and community partners to advance public education campaigns and initiatives at a statewide and/or local level.

• Advance anti-racist and social justice efforts within your local/and or association.

• Demonstrate that our union is advocate and fighter for equity and justice.
Conclusion

• 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