



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

Indicate the NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority your session addresses:

- NEA Strategic Goal
 - Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment
- NEA Organizational Priority
 - Early Career Educators

COMPETENCY: Organizing

- Level 1: Foundational and Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building
 - Utilizes organizing best practices
 - Engages in collective action to identify and address pivotal issues

How Did We Get Here? The History of Wisconsin's Act 10



What is Act 10?

- Known specifically as the 2011 Budget Repair Bill, Act 10 severely dismantled public sector union rights to collectively bargain
- Bargaining became restricted to one topic: CPI base wage increase
- Public employers must receive approval via public referendum to provide base wage increases above CPI



Act 10 Basics

- Requires public employees to begin to contribute 50% of the annual pension payment into their WRS accounts
- Requires public employees to contribute a minimum of 12.6% of the health insurance premiums to their own plans



Act 10 Basics

- Collective bargaining units/locals required to participate in a yearly certification election
 - Locals must achieve a minimum of 51% “yes” votes to remain certified.
 - Abstaining from the voting process is counted as as a “no” vote.



Act 10 Effects on Public Employees

- Take home wages for public sector employees have fallen between 10-20%
- Salary increases have been minimal as CPI has been relatively low (.12% for 2016-2017)
- Without the ability to negotiate robust CBAs, benefits and working conditions have atrophied

Act 10 Effects on State Organizations

- Fair Share elimination
 - The NEA and AFT state organizations (AFT-WI and WEAC)
 - Have seen up to a 60% reduction in membership
 - Have gone through reorganizations
- *WEAC sponsorship of Higher Ed locals (“Region 8” - eliminated as of September 2016)

Gateway Technical Education Association (GTEA)

- 273 Bargaining Unit Members
- Represent Instructors, Counselors, Advisors, Lab Techs, and Librarians
- Dues paying membership presently stands at 95



Act 10 Effects on Our Local: GTEA

- Contract Model vs Organizing Model Thinking:
 - Due to a “retirement rush” post Act 10, we were left with a dearth of leaders possessing institutional capital
 - New hires were brought in at significantly lower starting salaries, making member recruitment difficult
 - Difficulty in recruiting new local Leadership



Rebuilding and Reframing

- Soon after Act 10 was passed, GTEA began the process of moving toward an Organizing Model
 - One that views collective action and advocacy as touchstone
 - One that moves toward a conversation surrounding what “we give” instead of what “we get”
 - One that attempts to acknowledge and unify the needs of all members of our bargaining unit





No Compromise on GTEA Inner Values

*We insist on maintaining a local dues structure
- \$120/year

*We insist on providing GTEA Leadership Officers with
yearly stipends for their service

*We refuse to compromise our cash reserves



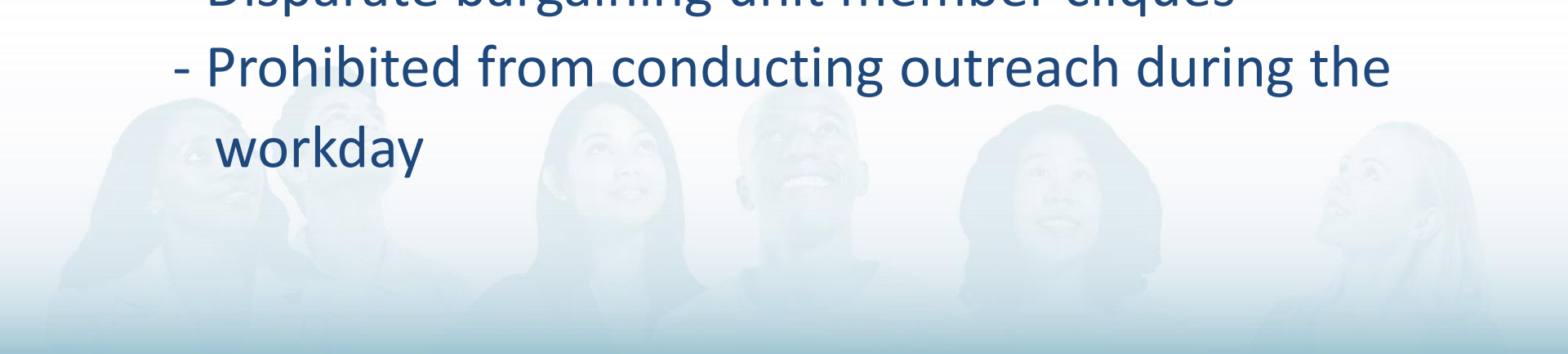


Trials...

*Convincing people to organize is difficult


- Individualism vs Collectivism are values
- Fear is pervasive

*Communication is difficult

- We are located across 4 campuses and 75 miles
 - Disparate bargaining unit member cliques
 - Prohibited from conducting outreach during the workday
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And more Trials...

- Relationship Building with Administration is painstakingly difficult
 - Grudges
 - Lack of new political players
 - Excessive power grabs
 - GTEA framed as the enemy of employees
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Triumphs

- Rebuilding Local Leadership
 - The COR (Council of Reps), down to 7 members in 2013, now sits full at 15 Leaders
 - We added a new Leadership position in 2016
 - *Communications Coordinator
 - Designed a Newsletter: *Our Voice*



And More Triumphs...

- Successfully engaged in a small and large group organizing activities in 2015-16
 - *Organized 3 student services members to address their issues directly with their supervisor
 - *Organized a group survey response to GTEA's Inservice presentation elimination

These activities had an effect, though temporary.






Trials and Triumphs to Come...

- “Merit Pay” pushback in favor of reinstatement of lanes and steps model
- We contacted and onboarded 17 bargaining unit members with frozen salaries
- We expanded that group during lunch at Inservice in January 2017.
- Goal is to empower the large group to address salary issues with administration in May of 2017





Group Roundtable Discussion

- Initial feedback?
 - If you were a GTEA Leader, what would be your organizing strategy moving forward?
 - Examples of successful organizing campaigns in your states or locals?
 - How do we prepare for what might be universal right-to-work legislation, the elimination of Fair Share, and the decimation of our contracts/CBAs?
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References



Session Outcomes

- The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:
 - Prepare for what may be the inevitable spread of Act 10's agenda to your state
 - Return to the grassroots organizing principles of Unionism at the local level instead of hiding behind and within your Contract

Thank You!

- Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session!
- Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment