



# 95 Ways to Engage Members through Family & Community Outreach

*Today's educational professionals, through their local unions, have tremendous power to positively impact students' lives when they partner with families and community organizations*

*for the common good. Use this menu of ideas to help plan a year round, engagement calendar for your members. Together, you will build ongoing, mutually supportive relationships that benefit all children in your community.*

## FALL

- Back to school- Provide a downloadable Union Made School Supply List on your website for parents and educators and promote it via social media. (<http://www.nea.org/home/Union-Made-School-Supplies.html>)
- What Teachers Give/What Parents Give awareness campaign- Highlight the supplies that teachers purchase out of pocket to create welcoming classrooms in an effort to highlight the underfunding of public schools on social media and in earned media.
- Host a Back to School supply drive in your community. Partner with parent organizations, businesses and community agencies. Tie this into the "What Teachers Give" campaign.
- Parent Teacher Conference Nights- Recall your "What teachers give/what parents give" campaign. Show off the out of pocket donations from teachers, parents and community with balloons, flags or ribbons designating the items that have been provided.
- Create a printable tool that provides information on how to have a productive parent teacher conference. Provide it on your website. Promote it on social media and in communications.
- Labor Day- Plan a Labor Day picnic for members, families and the community. Celebrate your association!
- Leading up to Labor Day, use your communication channels to promote and celebrate the role of labor unions in the country's history.
- Host a Fall Carnival for families. Engage community partners to co-sponsor. Make sure your members are highly visible as volunteers. Partner with parent organizations to encourage turnout.
- Host a FAFSA Night to help students and families complete their federal financial aid application.
- Halloween- Provide and promote a printable list of union made candy and encourage the community to Buy Union.
- Host a "Costumes for Classrooms" drive to provide new or gently used costumes to kids in need.
- Plan a Tailgate Trick or Treat with members and community partners for children in underserved neighborhoods.
- Read O' Ween- provide a safe environment for students to dress in book based costumes to read and trick or treat.
- Local, State, National Elections- Provide links to voter registration and voter resources on your website and promote it via communications.
- Create a campaign around voting for children or voting for public schools.
- Host candidate forums for the community in advance of an election.
- Partner with the district and community agencies to host voter registration drives.
- Consider including community representatives in your candidate endorsement process.
- Veterans Day- Make sure to showcase your members that are serving or have served. Celebrate them in your communications and honor them with a family and community appreciation event.
- Team up with community partners to participate in local Veterans Day activities around your community.
- Partner with your PTA/PTO organizations to organize visits to local retirement homes, veterans hospitals, VFWs, and American Legions to honor veterans.
- Consider a recruitment drive around the Troops to Teachers initiative.



## WINTER

- Thanksgiving- Participate in or host a community food drive for families in need. Recruit business and community partners.
- Create a "We're thankful" campaign to thank your community partners for the wonderful work they do to support students.
- Giving Tuesday- Promote your non-profit partners' Giving Tuesday campaigns and encourage members to participate.
- Highlight what your community partners do to support students and public schools every day in your Giving Tuesday messaging.
- Winter Holidays- Participate in or host a holiday toy and book drive or food drive. Leverage your relationships with businesses and community groups. Provide resources like volunteers, communications and space.
- Host a holiday party for children and families. Provide them with books, toys and food. Give parents DIY activities to do with their children during the winter break.
- New Year- Host a community shredding event for personal documents so people can "Start the New Year Right" and prevent identity theft.
- Have teachers meet parents as they drop off their children on the first day back with a branded list of ideas how they can partner in the second half of the year. (Bonus- provide your affiliate's calendar of community events.)
- Promote an online campaign to advocate for children's issues using #IResolveTo.
- Have an op-ed placed in the local paper at the beginning of January about all the things teachers resolve to advocate for on behalf of children during the new year.
- Create a printable New Year's graphic with "I resolve to" at the top and "for kids" at the bottom. Ask members and community to fill in their resolution and post a picture of them holding it.
- Martin Luther King Jr's birthday- Plan a Day of Service event and invite parents and students to participate with your members.
- Host an MLK Breakfast and honor a local civil rights champion.
- Celebrate the holiday on social media using images and famous quotes.
- Black History Month- Host a public conversation about issues of race and diversity using a panel discussion or town hall format.
- Plan a celebration of black history in cooperation with a school, community organization and/or parents. Involve students and your members.
- Groundhog Day- Provide free classroom printables on your website. See the NEA Tools and Ideas section on their website.
- Celebrate the coming of spring on social media.
- Presidents' Day- Promote #ifIwerePresident as a hashtag online and encourage responses highlighting your shared community priorities for children and schools.

**Continued on back**



- Create a downloadable "If I Were the President..." activity for educators and parents elevating and focusing on the priorities you have related to public schools.
- Valentine's Day- Have printable valentines on your website available for educators and parents to use with students. Brand them with your logo and a short statement about how your association "loves" students.
- Sponsor a "LOVE" themed community blood drive.
- Host a We "LOVE" reading book drive.
- Sponsor a WE "LOVE" our school campus beautification.
- Sponsor a We "LOVE" STEM community family night designed to demystify STEM at home for parents.
- Promote Random Acts of Kindness at your schools and encourage followers to post their acts to promote a strong school culture.
- Focus on the theme of kindness in your social media and online communications.

## SPRING

- National Pi Day- Plan a STEM event for educators and families. Invite community partners to participate with supplies and food.
- Provide downloadable Pi Day activities for educators and parents on your website.
- St. Patrick's Day- Promote the NEA classroom resources for educators and parents using social media and digital communications <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/51015.htm>
- Provide palm cards on your website for teachers to download with a "LUCKY" theme; Have the front customizable for teachers to tell students why they are so "Lucky" to teach them. The back should have your association information.
- Provide "We are so LUCKY because..." cards for members to send home with students to highlight their appreciation.
- Spring break- Partner with community groups to host a spring break camp for students.
- Run a food drive to help fill school pantries & community food pantries in advance of the break. Using social media, illustrate the food insecurities children face in your community.
- Create take home food bags for students in need. Include easy activities families can do to promote learning at home. Brand all materials with your association logo and information.
- Provide branded DIY reading and math activities on your website and promote them to educators and parents to use during the break.
- Dr. Suess' Birthday/Read Across America- use the NEA guide to plan a reading event in your community.
- Promote reading resources on your website and social media. Remember to use the Read Across America hashtag so others can see what you are doing.
- April Fools' Day- Use the day to highlight the wonderful things your association does for members, students and the community. Use hashtags and graphics to make sure readers know these things are real and not an April Fools' joke!
- Tax Season- Sponsor a tax preparation day for low income families.
- Earth Day- Host a community recycling event at your offices or in partnership with a community agency.
- Plan a Day of Service cleaning up public spaces and local parks. Promote it to members, families and the community.
- Teacher Appreciation Week- Use the NEA National Teacher Day Toolkit to plan events and campaigns.
- Host an awards gala and invite the community to help celebrate the wonderful teachers in your affiliate.
- Partner with local media outlets to highlight special teachers during the week.
- Include parent groups and community partners when planning your teacher appreciation celebrations.
- Mothers' Day- Be sure to be inclusive. Use this day to celebrate caregivers and families of all kinds.

## SUMMER

- Cinco de Mayo- Reach out to local cultural organizations and offer to promote and participate in their family friendly events.
- Memorial Day- Honor our nation's fallen by hosting a day of service and remembrance.
- Partner with community agencies and local municipalities on existing events.
- Join with community partners to participate in flag laying ceremonies at local cemetaries.
- If you are in a military community, make sure you are visible in showing your affiliate's appreciation for their service.
- Graduations- Celebrate your educators' students' success stories in your communications. Illustrate the difference educators make in the lives of young people.
- If finances allow, offer a scholarship and host an essay contest. Have students use the topic "A Teacher Who Changed My Life."
- Tout how much public schools have impacted your community. Highlight prominent people in your community that have graduated from public schools on social media.
- Host a campus beautification day at a local school. Partner with parent and neighborhood groups. Ask local businesses for donations of supplies and refreshments.
- Father's Day- Remember to be inclusive. Use this day to celebrate caregivers and families.
- Promote summer learning and highlight summer learning loss. Provide access to resources for families and community agencies on your website.
- Partner with local agencies to highlight summer feeding programs for children. Host a food drive to support the efforts.
- Host a community event or partner with a community agency to pack Summer Learning Backpacks. Engage community partners to donate items and provide volunteers to stuff backpacks filled with summer learning activities and books to take home. All items should be branded with your affiliate's logo and information.
- Partner with community agencies to highlight summer learning opportunities for children. Consider reaching out to your local library, parks and recreation department, and others.
- Partner with local libraries to host summer reading events. Participate as guest readers and provide summer learning activities. Make sure members are highly visible in affiliate tshirts.
- Fourth of July- Participate in community celebrations as volunteers, sponsors or hosts. Take part as an association in a local parade.
- Voter Registration Food Truck Rally- Host a food truck event and make voter registration the primary objective. Invite your endorsed candidates to meet and mingle with the community at the event. Have a "Best Dish" contest and have your "celebrity judges" include school district leaders, students, teachers and community members.
- Host a summer event for children and families at a local park or recreation center. Provide ice cream treats or sponsor an ice cream truck. Use the event to register voters, promote summer learning or to highlight other efforts.



## ANNUAL

These events occur at times specific to your local community.

- When possible, partner with existing organizations on local celebrations. Offer to sponsor a specific part of the event in exchange for featuring your name and logo. Make sure your members are highly visible when serving as volunteers or participants.
- Partner with faith based groups or a local interfaith council on existing events like food drives and community conversations. Holidays like Ramadan, Easter, Passover and others are often marked with events and celebrations.
- Remember to attend your community partners' public events. When applicable, offer to provide assistance through volunteers, resources like social media promotions, or sponsorships.
- Using digital communication tools- highlight your priorities focusing on the issues that impact children. For example, if working conditions are part of your negotiations- highlight that children deserve a safe and clean learning environment.
- Host an event where you invite school based union leaders to bring one or two parents to create a community vision for public schools. Divide parents and school based leaders into mixed, small groups to answer three questions: What must every student have to ensure success? What role do parents and educators play in making this happen? What support do we need from other community agencies to make this happen? Develop action steps to make the vision a reality.
- Remind the public that you are fighting for things that impact children and educators.
- When appropriate, invite parents and community partners to advocate for educators with decision makers.
- Remember to include local election and primary election dates when you are planning. Refer to ideas in FALL around elections.



## NOTES