



**2025 NEA National Leadership Summit
Early Bird Sessions to Advance NEA’s Vision Priorities for 2024-2025
March 7, 2025 • 2:00-4:00 p.m. ET**

Note: Each of the sessions will offer 100 seats and will close after registrations reach 100. Once the maximum number of registrations is reached, the sessions will no longer be viewable in the registration system.

Within NEA's **Strategic Plan and Budget**, the association will prioritize the following efforts to advance the **Strategic Vision***. NEA will partner with leaders, affiliates, members and allies to impact these priority areas **ensuring that racial/social justice-based strategies and tools are foundational to our approach**. In advancing these priorities, the association will do so in a manner **that maximizes member engagement and enhances our “for members, by members” strategic approach to our work**.

Building a Movement to Promote, Protect, and Strengthen Public Education

Work in this priority will build an activated and mobilized network of pro-public education champions, from families and other community activists to leaders across government and other sectors of our society and economy to execute a campaign for public education.

Advancing Respect, Excellence, and Support for All Educators

Work in this priority will lead changes to the public education system that create a professional environment for ALL educators, no matter their job category, race, gender, or sexual orientation. These changes focus on advocating for and building respect for the professions by improving and expanding professional compensation and security, working conditions, collective bargaining rights, educator voice and autonomy, and the freedom to teach.

Advancing Learning, Success, and Well-Being for All Students

Work in this priority seeks to ensure that ALL students have access to well-resourced, inclusive, diverse, safe, experiential-based, accessible, greener, more modernized learning environments that provide a well-rounded, excellent education for every student.

Organizing for Power: Recruitment, Retention, Engagement, Empowerment, Mobilization of Our Members, Parent/Families and Allies

Work in this priority (done in partnership and alignment with our affiliates) will build our capacity and strengthen our organizing infrastructure through the cultivation, activation, and mobilization of our members and their networks, using member engagement, retention and recruitment strategies as well as the establishment of pathways designed for them to be empowered to lead in both in their school systems and the broader community. Increase the capacity of locals to be action-ready and/or strike-ready to mobilize the community in support of educators and students.

Securing and Supporting a Pro-Public Education, Pro-Union, Environment

Work in this this priority will build a sustainable pro-public education, pro-union legislative environment by electing (and re-electing) pro-public education, pro-union decision-makers to every branch of government, all around the country, and at every level of government, and preparing elected leaders to create and pass pro-public education policy.

Early Bird Session Descriptions

Title: *Movement-building through the Public School Strong Model: Lessons learned and How You Plug in*

Presenters: Asma Elhuni, James Haslam, Kyle Serrette

Public school systems across the country have long been a battlefield for competing visions of society. Recent attacks on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and LGBTQ+ people in schools are part of a well-funded, long-term effort to discredit, dismantle and privatize public education and with it, the very notion of public goods. Extremists and their wealthy backers want to destroy public schools because, if they are thriving and equitable, this challenges white supremacy and elite power.

Public School Strong (PSS) is a national campaign that builds power starting locally, so that every student – regardless of zip code, race, gender, or ethnicity – can have equitable access to quality, fully funded public schools. Initially developed by HEAL Together North Carolina in the spring of 2023, PSS has expanded to have participants from all 50 states and statewide organizing committees in more than a dozen states. This interactive session is designed for individuals, grassroots groups and allied organizations to explore this model and how to plug in.

Title: Union Led Professional Learning: Exploring NEA's Learning Management System

Presenters: **Brandy Bixler**

Join us for a two-hour session to discover how NEA's Learning Management System (LMS) supports educator growth and development. Explore NEA's Independent Learning and Blended Learning courses and see how the Arizona Education Association (AEA) is leveraging its portal to deliver professional learning opportunities for members. Hear from a panel of other state affiliates using the NEA Learning Management System to lead professional learning in their states.

Title: The Building Blocks of Power: Becoming Action-Ready in Your Local and State Affiliate One Worksite at a Time

Presenters: Vicki C. Rodriguez

In this session, participants will learn what it means to lean into leadership as an organizer by assessing their affiliate’s “action-readiness” using tools and resources from the NEA’s Year-Round Organizing campaign and set goals for the steps to readiness by worksite. A virtual “tour” of the NEA’s organizing resource library will help participants locate and share resources that increase local capacity to win on issues important to members and potential members.

Title: *Building Safe, Healthy, Inclusive & Future-Focused Learning Environments for Every Student*

Presenters: Christine DonFrancesco, Elic Senter, Justin Thompson

Often, when policy decisions are made that directly impact a student’s learning environment, the educators who directly *work* within those learning environments aren’t at the table (in spite of laws requiring them to be). In this interactive priority pre-session, participants will gain knowledge and understanding of major school-related policy priorities and uncover pathways to engage in the passage and implementation of those policies. Leaders will engage in issues such as the future of assessment, artificial intelligence (AI), disability rights and inclusion, climate and environmental justice, social/emotional learning, health and safety issues like gun violence and student cell phone usage, family engagement, and more.

Participants will engage around these issues; grow their knowledge; receive tools and resources; discuss advocacy for the development and/or the revision of student-centered policies *and* the implementation of those policies; and leave with their *own* plan of how they will take action on the most pressing issues

facing them when they return home. Join us to learn how to leverage policy for wins for *every* student!

Title: *Going Local to Win Power: Building Effective School Boards Before, During, and After Election Day*

Presenters: Mary Kusler

Description: Our political climate is continuing to make school board elections critical for promoting, protecting, & strengthening public education. Effective advocacy must start before and continue after Election Day. Join us to hear successful case studies and resources available to help you and your local association elect pro-public education school board candidates and create policy wins for students and their educators.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the workshop participants will understand:

- Who is holding power on our school boards and the policy trends we are seeing
- How to be effective political advocates in their Local Association
- Key Principles for organizing their community & membership to elect pro-public education school board member & advance a policy agenda
- Where to go for policy guidance and training resources for School Board members
- Best Practices and where to find resources on Candidate Recruitment and Coalition Organizing for School Board elections