

NEA UniServ and Organizing Training Program 2025– 2026

The NEA Center for Organizing and Affiliate Support is pleased to announce our schedule for affiliate UniServ, Organizing staff, and Campaign Lab participants for the coming year. We are providing these descriptions and dates to you for planning purposes with your Affiliate Staff. Please note, there is a significant change this year. The only training programs that will be Affiliate Staff ONLY are Foundations Academies and Online Discussion Groups. All other programs will include Affiliate Staff AND Member Teams; these teams will be working on issue campaigns with the Campaign Lab.

The NEA National UniServ and Organizing Training Program encompasses the following:

- * **Foundations Academies – Staff Only** (See Pg. 10 for descriptions)
- * **Focus Academies – Staff and Member Teams** (See Pg. 12 for descriptions)
- * **Campaign Academies – Staff or Members in Campaign Lab** (Leads, Coaches, Mentor Coaches) (See Pg. 15 for dates and descriptions)
- * **Online Discussion Groups – Staff Only** (See Pg. 7 for dates and Pg. 17 for descriptions)
- * **Online Course Modules – Staff and Member Teams** (See Pg. 8 for descriptions)
- * **Online Campaign Modules – Staff or Members in Campaign Lab** (Leads, Coaches, Mentor Coaches)
- * **Organizing-Focused Tracks at NEA’s Constituency Conferences Staff and Member Teams**
 - Retired
 - Higher Ed
 - ESP
 - NCUEA

(See Track Overview Section Pg. 9 for more information about outcomes)

FOUNDATIONS ACADEMIES *(In-Person, Affiliate Staff Only)*

FOUNDATIONS ACADEMIES are designed for affiliate staff in their first and second years of UniServ staff work. The NEA UniServ Guidelines state that all new UniServ staff shall attend the Foundations Academy within their first two (2) years of employment. Based on our experience, UD’s who wait beyond their first two years have a more difficult time building basic organizing skills into their routines. All Foundations Academies include a worksite organizing experience and focus on supporting new staff in their work of building high-functioning locals that can recruit and engage members, organize around issues that our members care about, and develop emerging leaders. Foundations Academies are five full days – Monday through Friday, beginning at 8:30 AM, with travel to the location on Sunday and return travel after 4:00 PM on Friday evening.

- September 15-19, 2025, Montgomery, AL with K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience
- October 6-10, 2025, Salt Lake City, UT with K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience
- May 4-8, 2026, Grand Rapids, MI with K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience

(See Program Overview and Outcomes Section Pg. 10 for more information)

FOCUS ACADEMIES *(In-Person, Affiliate Staff and Member Teams)*

FOCUS ACADEMIES are designed for affiliate staff and member teams that are working on developing and implementing issue organizing campaigns. These staff and teams may already be in the NEA Campaign Lab at the Power Building (Base Building and Developing Structure) or they may be teams outside of the Campaign Lab. Affiliate Staff may attend individually or as part of a team.

Each Focus Academy begins on a Tuesday morning at 8:30 AM, lasts for two and a half days, with returning travel on Thursday after 4:00 PM. Organizing on HBCU Campuses is co-located with the HBCU Summit and begins on a Sunday to allow for those who may be attending both. Detailed descriptions can be found in the Focus Academies section of this document. *(All locations are TBD, pending hotel contracting):*

- **Organizing on HBCU Campuses, November 5-7, 2025**
- **Advancing LGBTQ+ Justice, December 2-4, 2025**
- **Advancing Racial Justice through Union Work, January 13-15, 2026**
- **Winning School Board Elections, February, 10-12 2026**
- **Organizing Strategies for ESP Members, March 25-27, 2026**

(See Program Description Section Pg. 12 for more information about outcomes)

CAMPAIGN ACADEMIES *(In-Person, Staff and Members in Campaign Lab: Leads, Coaches, Mentor Coaches)*

CAMPAIGN ACADEMIES are designed for affiliate staff and members that are currently in the NEA Campaign Lab. These are by invitation only. There are three levels of leadership within the NEA Campaign Lab: Organizing Team Leads, Campaign Coaches, and Mentor Coaches. Team leads are local member leaders who have submitted a Campaign Lab application and have been working with a Campaign Lab Coach. They are focused on developing an Organizing Team and leading that team in designing and implementing an issue campaign cycle. Campaign Coaches are members that have experienced leading an organizing team through at least two issue campaign cycles. Campaign Coaches commit to growing the capacity of at least one Team Lead to successfully implement a campaign cycle. Mentor Coaches are either Affiliate Staff or members who have broader experience with leading teams and locals implementing issue campaigns. Mentor Coaches are committed to growing the capacity of Coaches to move their Team Leads through campaign cycles.

Each Campaign Academy begins on a Friday morning at 8:30 AM, lasts for two and a half days, with return travel on Sunday after 4:00 PM. Detailed descriptions can be found in the Campaign Academies section of this document. *(All locations are TBD, pending hotel contracting):*

In the 2025-26 Program Year, there will be three Campaign Academies:

- **Coaching and Leading Winning Campaigns, June 20-23, 2025, May 15-17, 2026**
- **Coaching and Leading Strong Structures and Leaders, November 14-16, 2025**
- **Coaching and Leading from Single Issue to Multi-Issue March 13-15, 2026**

(See Program Description Section Pg. 15 for more information about outcomes)

Program Dates

For any event below where Affiliate Staff are attending, please submit your recommendations for as soon as possible due to space availability.

NEA NATIONAL UNISERV AND ORGANIZING TRAINING PROGRAMS
Coaching and Leading Winning Campaigns (Campaign Lab by Invitation Only) June 20-23, 2025
FOUNDATIONS ACADEMY K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience (Staff Only) September 15-19, 2025 - Montgomery, Alabama
FOUNDATIONS ACADEMY K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience (Staff Only) October 6-10, 2025 – Salt Lake City, Utah
Organizing on HBCU Campuses (Staff and Member Teams) November 5-7, 2025
Coaching and Leading Strong Structures and Leadership (Campaign Lab by Invitation Only) November 14-16, 2025
Advancing LGBTQ+ Justice (Staff and Member Teams) December 2-4, 2025
Advancing Racial Justice (Staff and Member Teams) January 13-15, 2026
Winning School Board Elections (Staff and Member Teams) February 10-12, 2026 – St. Louis, Missouri
Higher Ed Conference – Organizing Track (Staff and Member Teams) March 6-8, 2026
Coaching and Leading Single Issue Campaigns to Multi Issue Campaigns (Campaign Lab by Invitation Only) March 13-15, 2026
Retired Conference – Organizing Track (Staff and Member Teams) March 15-17, 2026
Organizing Strategies for ESP (Staff and Member Teams) March 25-27, 2026, Anaheim, California
FOUNDATIONS ACADEMY K-12 Worksite Organizing Experience (Staff Only) May 4-8, 2026 – Grand Rapids, Michigan
Coaching and Leading Winning Campaigns (Campaign Lab by Invitation Only) May 15-17, 2026

Registration Process for In-Person Programs

STEP 1: As the Manager, complete the [Manager's Recommendation Form](#) for any affiliate staff that plan to attend a Foundations Academy, Focused Academy, or Campaign Academy. For those staff who are bringing member teams to the Focused Academies or Campaign Academies, they should provide the full member team list with First Name, Last Name, and Email of each person for the Manager to include on the Recommendation Form. Please note, the form must be completed by the manager for any Academy sessions that you approve your staff to attend, and for any that include member teams.

STEP 2: Staff or staff with member teams are recorded as "accepted" unless it is noted on the form that there is a waiting list. Please let your staff and any member teams know that they have been approved and should save the dates on their calendars. State Presidents will be notified, in accordance with NEA regulations of any members "accepted" and will have 48 hours to let us know if there are any issue.

STEP 3: Approximately two (2) months in advance of the program, participants will receive a separate email with the formal, individual Registration Form for them to complete from Karla Medina, kmedina@nea.org.

STEP 4: Once affiliate staff and member teams register, they will be provided with instructions to make their travel arrangements through NEA's travel agency - AmTrav. (*NOTE: NEA will not reimburse travel arrangements made independently of AmTrav.*)

Detailed information about each Academy will be sent to all participants approximately one month prior to each session. All Academies are paperless and require participants to register with NEA Learning Management System. They will be expected to complete pre-attendance activities, download needed documents, and attend with laptops or tablets.

The number of participants for each in-person program is capped at **40 per session**. Therefore, forms should be submitted as early as possible, and no later than the listed deadlines. Additional applicants can be placed on waiting lists. Managers interested in sending more than five (5) Affiliate Staff to any single program should talk with our program coordinator (Ellen Holmes, eholmes@nea.org) in advance to review expectations.

Manager Recommendation Form
For Staff Attending In-Person Programs:
[CLICK HERE TO BEGIN REGISTRATION PROCESS](#)

Participant Expectations for All In-Person Programs

Attendance

We ask that managers ensure staff schedules are adjusted so their staff can attend and participate in all portions of any program. Staff attending the **Foundations Academy** should understand that **there will be a worksite organizing experience** in which all attendees are required to participate. You are encouraged to have conversations with your staff in advance, so that the attendance expectations and time commitments are understood.

Members must secure the appropriate time from their employers to attend. NEA does not cover substitutes. For members in the Campaign Lab already, substitute costs could be covered by their grant. We encourage state and local affiliates to invest in the development of members by covering substitute costs. Members and Staff attending the **Winning School Boards Academy** should understand that **there will be a worksite organizing experience** in which all attendees are required to participate.

All participants are expected to be present and engaged for the full time and should not plan on arriving late or leaving early. Any schedule adjustments should be discussed with NEA staff and approved in advance. All participants are expected to participate in all learning activities.

Technology

Participants will be required to use their laptops and smartphones to support their learning during Academies. Participants will use the NEA Learning Management System to access a number of documents. Participants will be using conference facility Wi-Fi, and these are often not secure. Please inform your appropriate IT personnel to ensure that participants either can access this type of Wi-Fi or are equipped with appropriate hotspot devices. We will not be able to troubleshoot significant issues once on-site. For members who may not readily have access to laptops, we encourage the local or state affiliate to provide them with one.

Costs

NEA funds the related travel and training expenses for affiliate staff and member teams to attend in-person programs (*in accord with NEA's Travel Policies and the UniServ and Organizer Training Reimbursement Process*), provided they attend for the full time. If they arrive late or leave early, the costs of their participation may be charged back to the affiliate. All flight reservations must be completed at least 21 days prior to the first date of travel. Any not made within this window will be at the cost of the affiliate. NEA will not reimburse for travel arrangements made independently of NEA's AmTrav travel agency.

Under NEA's *UniServ and Organizer Training Reimbursement Process*, airfare and hotels are direct billed to NEA, and we provide a stipend payment back to the employing or representing affiliate following the program to cover transportation to/from airports, baggage fees, and daily per diem for meals and expenses, in accord with NEA's Non-Staff Travel Policies and the GSA/CONUS per diem rates for the location. Staff and members will follow their affiliate's processes for reimbursement.

NEA may incur considerable cost for individuals who cancel. Therefore, in the event of cancellation, the Organizer or UniServ Director's employer agrees to reimburse NEA for the

cost of direct-billed airline tickets and/or change fees that cannot be recovered. This may also include the cost of hotel rooms if NEA is unable to cancel the room without penalty. All cancellations must be in writing by the staffperson with a copy to their manager. In the case of a member, the cancellation must be in writing with a copy to the Staff Person who was attending with them. Any cancellations must be emailed to Karla Medina (kmedina@nea.org) with a copy to Kyle Serrette, Program Manager of Campaign Lab (kserrette@nea.org)

2025-26 Online Discussion Events

(Staff Only)

Registration can be done directly by affiliate UniServ staff using the following directions:

Online Discussions begin at 2:30 ET and conclude at 4:00 ET. To Register for any online program you must use a **VALID WORK** email and follow these two steps:

Step 1 : You **must pre-register** with NEA POPS https://neapartnerb.learnupon.com/users/sign_in with a VALID work email to enroll in any of our online discussion groups.

Step 2: Click on the Unique Course link in the descriptions below. Upon course enrollment, you will receive two invitations. One from NEA POPS and one from Zoom. Both include a calendar invite that you can use to save to your work calendar.

- August 19, 2025, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [NEA Campaign Lab – Building the Power We Need to Win in These Times](#)
- September 23, 2025, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Data for Organizing – Using Excel to Evaluate Membership](#)
- September 25, 2025 - 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Safe Schools: Tools and Strategies to Address Gun Violence in Schools](#)
- October 16, 2025, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Foundations of LGBTQ+ Justice](#)
- November 13, 2025, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Safe Schools: Promoting Occupational and Environmental Health](#)
- December 11, 2025, 2:30-4:00 PM ET – [Data for Organizing: Using Excel: Advanced Tools for Power Analysis](#)
- January 21-22, 28-29, 2026 2:30-4:00 PM ET – [Teacher Unions and Social Justice Series](#)
- February 17, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET – [Safe Schools – Advocating for Student Well-being and Restrictions on Student Personal Device Use](#)
- March 5, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Strong and Effective Sex Ed Advocacy to Promote Student Health and Academic Success](#)
- March 12, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET [Data for Organizing: Disseminating Information](#)
- April 23, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET - [Winning School Board Elections](#)
- April 28-30, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET – [Organizing through Advocacy Series](#)
- May 21, 2026, 2:30-4:00 PM ET- [Data for Organizing: Campaign Progress Tracking](#)

(See Program Description Section Pg. 17 for more information about outcomes)

2025-26 Online Course Modules and Campaign Modules

(Staff and Members)

The NEA Center for Organizing and Affiliate Support is pleased to announce that we will be offering a series of course modules – both synchronous and asynchronous - hosted on our learning management system. The topics will be aligned with the skills and issues UniServ Directors and Organizers need to be successful in their affiliate work. Completion of these is ungraded, but participation can be tracked so that individuals have a record of the programs they have participated in.

More information about course offerings, registration and access to this learning management system will be provided by December 1, 2025.

All Online Courses will be located on the NEA Course

Platform: https://neapartnera.learnupon.com/users/sign_in

To get started:

1. Log in to the course platform using the link provided above.
2. Search for “Campaign Lab”
3. Explore the course materials at your convenience.
4. Engage with the content, apply your new skills and, reflect on your learning.

2025-26 NEA Constituency Conference Tracks

(Staff and Member Teams)

Track Overview

A number of Affiliate Staff routinely attend the NEA Constituency Conferences - Higher Ed, Retired, NCUEA, and ESP. Participant evaluations from these conferences have asked for a more in-depth, application driven program on organizing, leadership development, and power building.

To address this need, the NEA Center for Organizing and Affiliate Support will be providing a track on constituency-focused organizing skills for Affiliate Staff and teams of members. Participants who choose this track will learn key leadership identification and development skills and how to identify organizing issues and develop an escalation of tactics to build power and capacity for winning. Teams will leave with well-developed campaign plans.

Affiliate staff and members' costs for those who register for and attend all portions of the Organizing Track will be covered in accord with the member or staffer's Professional Development or State Staff Travel Policies and procedures. Under NEA's *UniServ and Organizer Training Reimbursement Process*, airfare and hotels are direct billed to NEA, and we provide a stipend payment back to the employing or representing affiliate following the program to cover transportation to/from airports, baggage fees, and daily per diem for meals and expenses, in accord with NEA's Non-Staff Travel Policies and the GSA/CONUS per diem rates for the location. Staff and members will follow their affiliate's processes for reimbursement.

To register for these team-based tracks, interested participants should follow the registration procedures outlined for each of the following conferences. Information will be available closer to the conference dates on the NEA website(www.nea.org).

- June 28-29, 2025 - NCUEA Summer Leadership, Portland Oregon
- March 6-8, 2026 - Higher Education Conference
- March 15-17, 2026 - Retired Conference,
- March 27-29, 2026 - ESP Conference, Anaheim, CA

(Program Descriptions and outcomes will be listed in conference registration sites.)

2025-2026 Foundation Academies

(Staff Only)

Program Overview and Outcomes

Reminder, the registration process for all in-person programs begins with the completion of the [Manager's Recommendation Form](#) for any affiliate staff that plan to attend a Foundations Academy, Focused Academy, or Campaign Academy. For those staff who are bringing member teams to the Focused Academies or Campaign Academies, they should provide the full member team list with First Name, Last Name, and Email of each person for the Manager to include on the Recommendation Form. Please note, the form must be completed by the manager for any Academy sessions that you approve your staff to attend, and for any that include member teams.

Day One - Focus on the individual - What do you bring to the work?

Topic Overview

Foundations of Who a UniServ Director is (Competencies)
 Core Values and Shared Value
 Leadership and Communication Styles
 Framework for Understanding Power and Oppression
 Unconscious Bias
 Organizing Conversations and Coaching

Key Outcomes for the Day:

Participants will identify their own communication style.
 Participants will develop an understanding of power by also learning about oppression and privilege.
 Participants will learn about a framework of understanding oppression so that they can better identify actions to take in seeking justice.
 Participants will understand the role listening plays in developing a sense of belonging/relationship and developing power, growth, and engagement.
 Participants will understand a framework for coaching in organizing and apply it to scenarios.

Day Two - Focus on the collective - What can we do together?

Topic Overview

Organizational Culture - Advocacy, Mobilizing, Organizing
 Role of the UniServ in Different Theories
 Framework for Systems of Oppression Applied to Power
 Structures of Leadership
 Worksite Mapping
 From engagement to action
 Scenario Team Introduction

Key Outcomes for the Day

Participants will learn a common definition for organizing, identify types of organizing cultures and their differences.
 Participants will explore their beliefs about their role and consider how that interacts with power building.
 Participants will apply the framework of expressions of oppression to scenarios.
 Participants will identify leadership structures in their locals.
 Participants will learn a system for coding rosters that can support organizing planning.

Participants will plan how to quickly activate a group of employees.

Day Three - Focus on Methods - What do I need to be able to do?

Topic Overview

Identify and Assess Organizing Issues
 Organizing Move People to Action - Major Majority Mentality
 Leader Identification and Development
 Organizing Conversation Continued
 Preparation for Worksite Organizing Visits

Key Outcomes for Day 3

Participants will be able to identify organizing issues
 Participants will consider ways to identify and develop leaders
 Participants will engage in a process to help them deal with member engagement issues
 Participants will learn about types of organizing conversations and practice two kinds
 Participants will be introduced to the tools, methods, and materials that will support their worksite organizing experience

Day Four - Focus on Worksite Organizing Practice

A full day of team-based, worksite organizing conversations, with data collection/entry

Key Outcomes for Day 4

Participants will practice in real time their skills in holding organizing conversations, the methods for data collection within a real affiliate's plans and desired outcomes.

Day Five - Focus on goals, plans, outcomes - How do I know if we're winning?

Topic Overview

Debrief of goals, data, and outcomes from the worksite organizing experience
 Group Discussion and Presentation of Campaign Plans
 Escalating Campaign Design – Scenario Teams
 Issues, Demands, Targets, and Wins
 Tactics and Escalation
 Presentation and Coaching of Plans
 Final Celebration

Key Outcomes for Day 5

Participants will complete a true debrief of their worksite experiences
 Participants will practice designing an escalating campaign
 Participants will celebrate their learning and their community

2025-2026 Focus Academies

(Staff and Member Teams)

Program Descriptions

Reminder, the registration process for all in-person programs begins with the completion of the [Manager's Recommendation Form](#) for any affiliate staff that plan to attend a Foundations Academy, Focused Academy, or Campaign Academy. For those staff who are bringing member teams to the Focused Academies or Campaign Academies, they should provide the full member team list with First Name, Last Name, and Email of each person for the Manager to include on the Recommendation Form. Please note, the form must be completed by the manager for any Academy sessions that you approve your staff to attend, and for any that include member teams.

Organizing on HBCU Campuses

Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who work on or attend HBCU campuses or other non-predominantly white institutions of higher ed know that these institutions have a legacy of success for the students who attend. Studies show that these institutions of higher education provide their graduates with much higher rates of upward economic mobility than graduates of predominantly white institutions. Despite this, systems of power and inequality still plague the workers and students on these campuses. UniServ, Organizers, and Members in these settings have to be highly skilled in leading, coaching and organizing across racial differences and especially in dealing with systems of economic and racial oppressions. This training will build participants' skills in developing successful campaigns to win student and worker rights. Participants will learn how to build strong programs that elevate leaders, mobilizers, and activists in this important higher education setting. Participants will:

- **Understand role staff, leaders, and rank-and-file members play in building locals while maintaining a member-driven program**
- **Explore best practices from a number of member engagement case studies**
- **Explore a number of successful affiliates that have focused on HBCU Programs and Campaigns**
- **Develop skills around strategic planning, leadership tests, data collection, and narrative development.**
- **Complete a basic issue campaign plan**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders working to build campaigns on HBCU campuses and other non-predominantly white institutions of higher education. Registration priority will be given to teams of Staff and Members who are ready to work on an issue campaign. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to lead a campaign cycle focused on Racial Justice. *November 5-7, 2025*

Advancing LGBTQ+ Justice

Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders work with colleagues, and community members who belong to and are allies of the LGBTQ+ community. Understanding this community and their issues are critical to providing support and guidance that is not only inclusive but liberating. With partners from the Center for Racial Justice, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other experts participants will learn how to:

- **Establish common understandings about the identities under the LGBTQ+ community umbrella**
- **Develop a shared understanding of the anti LGBTQ+ policy landscape and how to develop counter narratives of inclusion and equity**
- **Deepen skills and strategies to confront implicit bias, micro-aggressions and stereotypes in the LGBTQ+ community**
- **Develop a toolset of tactics for dismantling systems of privilege and oppression as it relates to LGBTQ+ educators and students**
- **Complete a basic issue campaign plan**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders working to build campaigns around the issues critical to the LGBTQ+ community. Registration priority will be given to teams of Staff and Members who are ready to work on an issue campaign. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to lead a campaign cycle focused on LGBTQ+ Justice. ***December 2-4, 2025***

Advancing Racial Justice

Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders work with colleagues, supporters and partners to address white supremacy culture in many settings. They have to be highly skilled in leading, coaching and organizing across racial differences and especially in dealing with white fragility and interpersonal oppressions. UniServ, Organizers, and Members need to understand the methods and commitments required to center Racial Justice in all aspects of an issue campaign. The NEA Center for Organizing and the NEA Center for Social Justice provide training designed to build participants' skills through awareness of white supremacy culture, interpersonal racism and systemic racism. Participants will learn how to help themselves and others:

- **Establish a common language for talking explicitly about white supremacy culture in a campaign cycle**
- **Deepen skills and strategies to confront implicit bias, micro-aggressions and stereotypes**
- **Develop a shared understanding of the levels of racism with a focus on a power analysis required to make change at various levels**
- **Develop a toolset of tactics for dismantling systems of privilege and oppression**
- **Complete a basic issue campaign plan**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders working to build campaigns around Racial Justice. Registration priority will be given to teams of Staff and Members who are ready to work on an issue campaign. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to lead a campaign cycle focused on Racial Justice. ***January 13-15, 2026***

Winning School Board Elections

Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders understand that there is a difference between the scope of worksite campaigns and local political campaigns such as school board elections. While both are important, school board elections make a huge impact in the day-to-day lives of public school employees. These campaigns also provide important union presence and power building internally and externally. To win, staff need to continue to build strong leaders, mobilizers, and activists while also building relationships with outside groups, mobilizing voters, and finding candidates. Participants will:

- **Understand role staff, members, and leaders can play to guide their locals while maintaining a member-driven program**
- **Realize member engagement plans must communicate to members as voters, volunteers, and campaign leaders**
- **Recognize different roles the public can play in candidate recruitment and outreach through traditional voter contact and coalitions**
- **Explore best practices from a member engagement case study, an organized opposition campaign, and strategic candidate recruitment models**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders planning to support locals engaged in school board elections. Registration priority will be given to teams of Staff and Members who are ready to work on an issue campaign. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to lead a campaign cycle focused on a local school board race.

February 10-12, 2026

Organizing with ESP

Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who work with ESP locals are responsible for identifying and developing leaders, organizing issue campaigns, and understanding and advocating for the unique needs of ESP members. Strong ESP affiliates have a high ratio of engaged leaders to rank and file members and structures that allow for rapid response, relationship development and collective action. This NEA Center for Organizing training is designed to build skills around ESP leadership identification and development. They will learn how to establish differentiated and innovative structures that can increase member engagement and union presence within and across worksites of the various job families within ESP. Participants will learn how to help themselves and others:

- **Identify and develop potential ESP leaders**
- **Develop a shared understanding of ESP leadership structures**
- **Explore a number of successful affiliates that have focused on ESP leadership development and engagement structures**
- **Identify relevant resources available for ESP led career and leadership development**
- **Build and deepen skills for working with ESP leaders and growing potential leaders**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders planning to support locals engaged in ESP issue organizing. Registration priority will be given to teams of Staff and Members who are ready to work on an issue campaign. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources for them to lead a campaign cycle focused on ESP Issues. *March 25-27, 2026*

2025-2026 Campaign Academies

(Staff and Members who are Team Leads, Coaches, or Mentor Coaches in Campaign Lab or intending to become part of the Campaign Lab)

Program Descriptions

Reminder, the registration process for Campaign Academies begins with an invitation from NEA Campaign Lab Staff to Team Leads, Coaches, and Mentor Coaches. Managers of staff who are invited must complete the [Manager's Recommendation Form](#) for any affiliate staff that plan to attend a Foundations Academy, Focused Academy, or Campaign Academy. For those staff who are bringing member teams to the Focused Academies or Campaign Academies, they should provide the full member team list with First Name, Last Name, and Email of each person for the Manager to include on the Recommendation Form. For any team that does not include a staff person, they still need to use the Manager's Recommendation form, and enter Ellen Holmes, eholmes@nea.org in the manager section. Please note, the form must be completed by the manager for any Academy sessions that affiliate staff to attend, and for any that include member teams.

Coaching and Leading Winning Campaigns

The Campaign Lab is a system of Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders networked to build power to win on issues that matter most. A focus is on a distributed model of Leadership and Coaching focused on building a culture for issue organizing. This requires a strong understanding of organizing and continually campaigning. It includes a shared analysis of how to win, issue identification, goal setting, strategic actions, distributed leadership, and data that informs a campaign's progress. This NEA Center for Organizing training is designed to build skills around coaching and leading all aspects of a campaign cycle. Participants will learn how to help themselves and others:

- **Develop core coaching skills that transform individual and team agency into action within an issue campaign**
- **Build strong leadership teams with defined boundaries and roles**
- **Develop skills around strategic planning, leadership tests, data collection, and narrative development.**
- **Move away from episodic mobilization of the already engaged – to the deeper work of moving people to “our” side.**
- **Focus on long-term campaign planning around organizing issues.**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who are already Team Leads, Coaches, or Mentor Coaches in the Campaign Lab System. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to coach and lead an issue campaign cycle. *June 20-23, 2025 and May 15-17, 2026*

Coaching and Leading Strong Structures and Leadership

The Campaign Lab is a system of Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who want to build powerful locals and are responsible for identifying and developing leaders through strategic issue campaigns. Strong local affiliates have a high ratio of engaged leaders to rank and file members and structures that allow for rapid response, relationship development and collective action. This powerful form of base building must also be linked to other strategies that include coalitions, partnerships, and alignments. This NEA Center for Organizing training is designed to build skills around coaching leadership identification and development. Participants will learn how to coach towards the establishment of differentiated and

innovative structures that increase member engagement, union presence, and build external partnerships by continuously participating in campaign cycles. Participants will learn how to help themselves and others:

- **Develop key coaching skills and apply them for appropriate interventions and growth of leaders within an issue campaign**
- **Coach for the growth and agitation of leaders and activists in ever expanding structures**
- **Understanding the methods for developing and supporting coalitions**
- **Design strategic alignment of leadership tests and tactics using scenarios and case studies.**
- **Understand “organizer math” for the number of people needed at each strategic point of a campaign and how to coach teams towards those metrics.**
- **Focus on long-term campaign planning around organizing issues.**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who are already Team Leads, Coaches, or Mentor Coaches in the Campaign Lab System. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to coach and lead an issue campaign cycle. **November 14-16, 2025**

Coaching and Leading from Single-Issue to Multi-Issue Campaigns

The Campaign Lab is a system of Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders networked across a growing number of affiliates to support multi-issue campaigns and create multi-racial alliances with communities. These affiliates and their alliances understand the importance of centering social justice in their work. Multi-issue, coalition driven organizing requires a shift in how we think about issue identification, power building, bargaining, partnerships, and the wins we achieve. This NEA Center for Organizing training builds understanding for more advanced coaching and campaign leadership around four key areas 1) defining what social justice unionism is and what it takes to achieve this; 2) broadening union leadership and expectations for what the union can win; 3) developing and testing leaders, structures, and tactics that result in power building; and 4) using internal and external structures to fight systems of injustice. Participants explore case studies where these concepts and practices are being applied at varying levels – introductory, developing and advanced. Participants will learn how to help themselves and others:

- **Refine coaching skills that move single-issue, single-constituency campaigns into the next stage of coalition building, and alignment with other justice seeking groups.**
- **Assess affiliate readiness and capacity to focus on multi-issue, multi-constituency work**
- **Develop a shared understanding of institutionalized and structural systems of oppression and apply power analysis and research methods**
- **Establish community partnerships with allies sharing common interests**
- **Build and practice the skills of social justice demands, narrative development, communication and multi-issue campaign planning**

This training is appropriate for Affiliate Staff, Members, and Leaders who are already Team Leads, Coaches, or Mentor Coaches in the Campaign Lab System. Participants should leave with a level of confidence, knowledge, methods, and resources allowing them to coach and lead an issue campaign cycle. **March 13-15, 2026**

2025-26 Online Discussion Events

(Staff Only)

Program Descriptions

Registration can be done directly by affiliate UniServ staff using the following directions:

Online Discussions begin at 2:30 ET and conclude at 4:00 ET. To Register for any online program, you must use a VALID WORK email and follow these two steps:

Step 1: You **must pre-register** with NEA POPS https://neapartnerb.learnupon.com/users/sign_in with a VALID work email to enroll in any of our online discussion groups.

Step 2: Click on the Unique Course link in the descriptions below. Upon course enrollment you will receive two invitations. One from NEA POPS and one from Zoom. Both include a calendar invite that you can use to save to your work calendar.

August 19, 2025- NEA Campaign Lab – Building the Power We Need to Win in These Times

This discussion will focus on how the NEA Campaign Lab helps local communities and their partners address various issues of equity and racial justice in education through well-planned campaigns. These issues could be related to schools or broader community concerns, such as class size reduction, affordable housing or increasing the minimum wage. The Lab is being executed in collaboration with the Alliance to Reclaim our Schools a national education justice coalition. All AROS organizations are recruiting local campaigns to participate. Participants will learn how to help their local leaders apply to be in the Lab, how to help high capacity leaders, apply to coaches in the Lab, or consider becoming mentor coaches in the Lab.

September 23, 2025- Data for Organizing – Using Excel to Evaluate Membership

This discussion will focus on the skills needed to successfully use Excel alongside data from databases such as NEA 360. Participants will apply basic sort and filter functions and learn more advanced tools such as pivot tables and goal seek. The basic skills needed for each session will be reviewed at the beginning; ensuring participants of any skill level can join at any time. Skill focus - Sort, Filter, Custom Sort, Sort by color, concatenate, text to columns.

September 25, 2025 – Safe Schools – Tools and Strategies to Address Gun Violence in Schools

Gun violence has a tremendous impact on the safety and wellness of students, educators, and the school community, whether it takes place in PreK-12 schools or institutions of higher education. This module empowers UniServ Directors and other staff to effectively counter gun violence and support elected leaders in that crucial work. Participants will learn about strategies and protocols for prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from incidents of gun violence. This module is one of three Health and Safety UniServ Academy sessions that highlight resources, tools, and strategies for affiliate staff to use with employees, families, lawmakers, and school administrators to advocate for and support health and safety in our PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

October 16, 2025 – Foundations of LGBTQ+ Justice

UniServ Directors and Organizers work with members, colleagues, and community members who belong to and are allies of the LGBTQ+ community. Understanding this community and their issues is critical to

providing support and guidance that is not only inclusive but liberating. Participants will learn about critical policies, strategies, and resources that will strengthen their methods, skills, and dispositions for work with this community.

November 13, 2025 – Safe Schools – Promoting Occupational and Environmental Health

This discussion focuses on strategies and tools to advocate for safer and healthier learning and working conditions. The module empowers participants to identify and address common environmental and occupational health and safety concerns like mold, lead, and poor indoor air quality. Using health and safety as a mobilizing tool against privatization, participants will also learn about the pathway-to-action tool to support students and educators. This module is one of three Health and Safety UniServ Academy sessions that highlight resources, tools, and strategies for affiliate staff to use with employees, families, lawmakers, and school administrators to advocate for and support health and safety in our PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

December 11, 2025 - Data for Organizing – Using Excel: Advanced Tools for Power Analysis

This discussion builds the skills needed for successful navigation of Excel to use member data from databases such as NEA 360, import non-member data, and successfully use other forms of community data. This session focuses on tools and functions allowing for analysis and assessment of potential partnerships, shared resources, and opportunities to build power beyond our current membership. Participants apply tools that sort, filter, and track this work allowing for ongoing power analysis and mapping. The basic skills needed for each session will be reviewed at the beginning; ensuring participants of any skill level can join at any time.

January 21-22, 28-29, 2026 – Teacher Unions and Social Justice Series

This series focuses on strategies used by a growing number of affiliate staff supporting the creation of multiracial alliances with communities and the importance of centering social justice in their unions. Social Justice Unionizing seeks to expand how we think about issue identification, power building, bargaining, partnerships, and the wins we achieve. Content and resources from the book, “Teacher Unions and Social Justice,” will be highlighted through a variety of media and discussion formats. The series will provide an in-depth study of the full text, and full attendance is strongly encouraged, but not required. For those who commit to attending all four sessions, and completed the registration at the link below before February 14, a copy of the book will be sent to you at no cost. You will be provided with additional information on how to order the book once you register.

- Session 1: **Defining what Social Justice Unionism is and what it takes to achieve this**
- Session 2: **Broadening union leadership and expectations for what unions can win**
- Session 3: **Developing and testing leaders, structures, and tactics that result in power building**
- Session 4: **Using internal and external structures to fight systems of injustice**

February 17, 2026 – Safe Schools – Advocating for Student Well-being and Restrictions on Student Personal Device Use

Rising numbers of mental health issues in young people is a call to action for comprehensive school mental health support and policy in schools. This module provides educators with strategies and tools to understand and address factors that impact mental health in education environments – with a focus on social media and students’ use of personal devices in school. Participants will learn about the pathway-to-action tool to support students and educators and will engage in a case study exercise. This module is one of three Health

and Safety UniServ Academy sessions that highlight resources, tools, and strategies for affiliate staff to use with employees, families, lawmakers, and school administrators to advocate for and support health and safety in our PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

March 5, 2026 - Strong and Effective Sex Ed Advocacy to Promote Student Health and Academic Success

Age-appropriate and medically accurate sexual health education plays a crucial role in improved health and academic outcomes for students. Yet, educators face barriers to teaching sex ed. This module will provide UniServ Directors and other staff an overview of sexual health education in schools, the connection between sex ed and student academic and health outcomes, and the significance of sex ed for achieving racial and social justice. Participants will engage in a case study exercise and identify strategies to advocate for policies and programs that improve and/or protect students' rights to receive education that will support healthy decision-making and positive sexual health outcomes. This module is a Health and Safety UniServ Academy session that will highlight resources, tools, and strategies for affiliate staff to use with employees, families, lawmakers, and school administrators to advocate for and support sexual health education in our Pre-K-12 schools.

March 12, 2026 – Data for Organizing – Disseminating Information

This discussion builds the skills for successfully navigating Excel to use member data from databases such as NEA 360, VAN, or other data bases. This session focuses on the tools and functions that support leader identification, targeted messaging, and activist invitation into mobilization. Participants will look at tools that track this work and create lists based on desired campaign outcomes. The basic skills needed for each session will be reviewed at the beginning, ensuring participants of any skill level can join at any time.

April 23, 2026 – Winning School Board Elections

School Board Elections are the races that make a huge impact in the day-to-day lives of our members and yet often are overlooked. Join this 90-minute virtual session to critically engage with and connect with colleagues across the country on how we can support our members in organizing around school board elections. We will discuss the key factors to successfully flipping a school board election including working with outside groups, mobilizing voters, and finding candidates. This session will focus on continuing to build our skills as affiliate staff to develop leaders, mobilize activists, create and maintain solid structures in worksites, and test our strength continually so that we can win big for public education everywhere, every time we step into the ring.

April 28-30, 2025 - Organizing through Advocacy Series

This three-part series will help affiliate staff refocus areas of advocacy through a member-engaged, organizing lens. UniServ Directors and Organizers are the first line of contact between the workers in our public schools and the state and national affiliates. The challenges of workload, shifting priorities, and having an organizing mindset in the face of overwhelming requests for service make the job a challenging and complex one.

General representation - interrupting the one-person one-problem model

- Grievance processing - interrupting the process and paper tiger approach
- Representing a member at the school board level - interrupting the superhero model
- Letter writing - interrupting the staff only brief
- Organizing around advocacy issues - moving from problems to issues for building power

May 21, 2025 – Data for Organizing – Campaign Progress Tracking

This discussion builds the skills to successfully use Excel with member data from databases such as NEA 360. This session focuses on the tools and functions that support the analysis of issues, evaluation of likely engagement, and tracking outcomes. The basic skills needed for each session will be reviewed at the beginning, ensuring participants of any skill level can join at any time.