

National
Education
Association



2026
Leadership
Summit



RESILIENCE. RESPECT. POWER.
Saving Public Education and Our Democracy
March 13-15, 2026 • Hyatt Regency Chicago



 NEA Summit Leaders

 #NEASummit #EdLeaders



NEA MISSION VISION VALUES

Adopted at the 2006 NEA Representative Assembly

The National Education Association

We, the members of the National Education Association of the United States, are the voice of education professionals. Our work is fundamental to the nation, and we accept the profound trust placed in us.

Our Vision

Our vision is a great public school for every student.

Our Mission

Our mission is to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

Our Core Values

These principles guide our work and define our mission:

Equal Opportunity. We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.

A Just Society. We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.

Democracy. We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

Professionalism. We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards, and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.

Partnership. We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success.

Collective Action. We believe individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.

Welcome to the 2026 NEA National Leadership Summit!

Dear NEA Leader:

As president of the National Education Association, I do not miss an opportunity to amplify our mission:

Our mission is to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

Our mission is just as important as it was when NEA was founded more than 150 years ago. What will it take to advance our mission? You! You are the NEA and you are the NEA's greatest resource.

You are doing tremendous work in spite of the challenges we face. And even with these challenges, you are creating opportunities for students to achieve their dreams. This is what leaders do and it is why a majority of Americans still support educators! And it is why the theme for this year's Summit is Resilience. Respect. Power. Saving Public Education and Our Democracy.

Even so, every leader needs opportunities to learn new skills, to be challenged by a new idea, to be willing to adopt a new mindset, to wrestle with unlearning behaviors that may have worked for you but may no longer be effective. This is the journey for all leaders. We are consistently on a journey, recognizing that leadership development is something we must commit to for our entire lives (yes, even in retirement our development continues).

This is why your participation at the 2026 NEA National Leadership Summit is so important. Every session will prepare and support you in learning new skills and information that will help expand your leadership and equip you to keep going, even when it feels impossible. As you learn, grow, and take action, the entire Association system (local, state, and national) is fueled by your collective energy, talent, and wisdom. With this organized power, we are able to escalate our collective activism in service of building a movement that will give students, educators, and communities what we deserve: a public education system that is safe, just, welcoming, and prepares every student to succeed, where every educator is respected and has what they need, and an economy and democracy that delivers for everyone.

Through this Summit, you will learn more about NEA's effort to create an association-wide leadership system, a system that capitalizes on the the power of local and state affiliates, NEA, community allies and partners that will enable us to increase the number of trained leaders. You will hear more about why NEA's strategic priority focus is organizing power. You will witness examples of how your colleagues are not just fighting back, but how they are fighting forward. I want you to set your intention, even before the first training session, that you will practice leading differently long after the Summit ends.

Everything is at stake. We must meet the moment. And we will!

I look forward to connecting with you in Chicago!

Onward,



Becky



Rebecca "Becky" Pringle
NEA President



A Message from the Summit Design Team

Greetings NEA Union Siblings and Guests,
 Welcome to the 2026 NEA National Leadership Summit!

We are thrilled to gather with you for this year's Summit, grounded in the powerful theme: Resilience. Respect. Power. Saving Public Education and Our Democracy. This theme reflects both the urgency of the moment and the strength of our collective leadership. At a time when public education and democratic values face unprecedented challenges, your presence here affirms a shared commitment to protecting, advancing, and reimagining the future of our schools and communities.

As education leaders, we know that resilience is strengthened we refuse to abandon our purpose, respect is earned through action, and power is realized when we lead together with purpose. Leadership development is central to this work. By strengthening your leadership skills, you are equipping yourself to advocate boldly, organize effectively, and lead with clarity and courage—whether in your local association, your classroom, worksite, or your community.

Throughout the Summit, you will engage in dynamic, competency-based sessions designed to deepen your leadership capacity, expand your perspective, and strengthen your networks. These experiences are intended not only to inform, but to teach you new skills—supporting you as you reflect on your leadership growth and envision how you will carry this work forward long after the Summit concludes.

This is your space to connect, learn, and recharge alongside fellow leaders who share your passion for public education and democracy. We hope you leave inspired, equipped, and energized to lead with resilience, honor the dignity of our profession, and exercise collective power to safeguard public education for generations to come.

Thank you for your dedication, your leadership, and your unwavering commitment to students, educators, and our democracy. Together, we are shaping a stronger, more just future.

The 2026 NEA Leadership Summit Design Team

Princess Moss

Chair, NEA Vice President, Virginia

Carol Bauer

President, Virginia

Anita Gibson

President, NEA-Retired

Mark Jewell

NEA Executive Committee,
 North Carolina

Ron 'Duff' Martin

NEA Executive Committee, Wisconsin

Paula Merrigan

NEA Board of Directors, California

Karen Moore

NEA Board of Directors, Illinois
 Education Association, Illinois

Shannon Rasmussen

President, National Council for Urban
 Education Associations

Grant Schuster

NEA Board of Directors, California
 Teacher Association, California

Audrey Gilbert

NEA Aspiring Educator, Kentucky

Darein Spann

President, Mississippi

Alec Thomson

President, National Council for Higher
 Education, Michigan

Lois Yukna

President, National Council for Education
 Support Professionals

Native Land Acknowledgment

Indigenous Tribes of Cook County and Chicago Area

We gratefully acknowledge that the 2026 NEA Leadership Summit takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded homelands of the Indigenous peoples of what is now known as Cook County and the Chicago region. According to the American Library Association, for countless generations, this place has been cared for and stewarded by Native nations, including the: Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples of the Council of the Three Fires, as well as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Sac and Fox, Kickapoo, and other tribes whose names and histories remain central to this land's story.

We honor the enduring presence and contributions of Native peoples past and present – including the vibrant urban Indigenous community that continues to live, work, and enrich this region today. We recognize that this land was and always will be Native land, and we commit ourselves to respect, learn from, and uplift Indigenous voices as we gather, lead, and build together.

As we fellowship, learn, network and lead this week, spend time reflecting on what this land truly means, and the profound impact native people continue to have in the Chicago area.

Here are resources to help you educate yourself and experience Native history and culture while in Chicago!

[Native American-owned and operated businesses in Chicago | Choose Chicago](#)



2026 NEA Leadership Summit Agenda-At-A Glance

The complete list of meetings and breakout session descriptions are available on nea.org/leadershipsummit.

Please note breakout sessions are in CENTRAL Time (CT).

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026		
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. CT	Leadership Development Training First-Year Board of Directors Training <i>(First-Year board members only)</i>	Grand Hall I
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2026		
9:00 a.m. CT	Check-In Opens	Grand Ballroom Foyer
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CT	Leadership Development Training <i>(First-Year board members only)</i>	Grand Hall I
2:00 – 4:00 p.m. CT	Early Bird Sessions <i>(These sessions are optional; space is limited)</i>	
4:15 – 4:45 p.m. CT	Presenter's Briefing	Crystal Ballroom C
5:00 – 6:00 p.m. CT	State Connections Sessions 1 <i>Connect with other Summit participants from your state.</i>	
6:30 – 8:00 p.m. CT	Friday Plenary Session	Grand Ballroom
8:00 – 10:00 p.m. CT	Summit Networking, Social/Dance Party, Movie Night <i>(Three concurrent experiences)</i>	Riverside Ballroom
SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2026		
6:30 – 8:00 a.m. CT	Buffet Breakfast	Riverside Ballroom
8:15 – 10:15 a.m. CT	Competency Content Sessions – Block 1	
10:30 – 11:30 a.m. CT	Saturday Plenary Session	Grand Ballroom
11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. CT	Lunch	Riverside Ballroom
1:00 – 3:00 p.m. CT	Competency Content Sessions – Block 2	
3:15 – 4:15 p.m. CT	Caucus and Council Engagements	
4:30 – 5:30 p.m. CT	State Connections Sessions 2 <i>Connect with other Summit participants from your state.</i>	
SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026		
6:30 – 8:00 a.m. CT	Buffet Breakfast	Riverside Ballroom
8:15 – 10:15 a.m. CT	Competency Content Sessions – Block 3	
10:30 – 11:30 a.m. CT	Closing Plenary	Grand Ballroom

Summit Venue – Hyatt Regency Chicago

The Hyatt Regency Chicago is the city's ultimate luxury hotel, providing an exceptional setting for the Summit. Located along the river, the largest hotel in downtown Chicago has easy access to Navy Pier, Millenium Park, Chicago Riverwalk, the Magnificent Mile, Lake Michigan and much more!

HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO

GUEST MAP

WELCOME TO HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO. Meeting rooms, ballrooms, restaurants and guest amenities are listed in alphabetical order and color coded by floor. For help, dial Guest Services at Extension 52.

- ACAPULCO** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- ADDAMS** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- ADDAMS FOYER** West Tower, Third Floor
- AMERICAN CRAFT KITCHEN & BAR** East Tower, Lobby Level
- ATLANTA** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- BELL DESK** East Tower, Skyway Level
- BIG BAR** East Tower, Skyway Level
- BURNHAM** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- BUSINESS CENTER, PACKAGE ROOM** East Tower, Exhibit Level
- COLUMBIAN** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- COMISKEY** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- CONCIERGE** East Tower, Lobby Level
- CRYSTAL BALLROOM** West Tower, Lobby Level
- DUSABLE** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- EAST TOWER MAIN ENTRANCE** East Tower, Lobby Level
- EAST TOWER VALET** East Tower, Ballroom Level
- FIELD** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- FITNESS CENTER** West Tower, Skyway Level
- FRONT DESK** East Tower, Skyway Level
- THE GALLERY COLLECTION** West Tower, Skyway Level
- GIFT SHOP** East Tower, Concourse Level
- GOLD COAST** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- GRAND BALLROOM** East Tower, Ballroom Level
- GRAND HALL (ROOMS G-N)** East Tower, Ballroom Level
- GRAND SUITES** East Tower, Ballroom Level
- HAYMARKET** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- HERTZ** East Tower, Lobby Level
- HONG KONG** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- HORNER** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- THE LIVING ROOM** West Tower, Skyway Level
- MARKET CHICAGO** East Tower, Lobby Level
- MCCORMICK** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- MICHIGAN** (Lakeshore Meeting Rooms) East Tower, Concourse Level
- MONROE** (Lakeshore Meeting Rooms) East Tower, Concourse Level
- NEW ORLEANS** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- OGDEN** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- PICASSO** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- PLAZA BALLROOM** East Tower, Lobby Level
- RANDOLPH** (Lakeshore Meeting Rooms) East Tower, Concourse Level
- REGENCY BALLROOM** West Tower, Ballroom Level
- RIVERSIDE CENTER** East Tower, Exhibit Level
- ROOSEVELT** (Lakeshore Meeting Rooms) East Tower, Concourse Level
- SAN FRANCISCO** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- SKYWAY MEETING ROOMS** East Tower, Skyway Level
- SOLDIER FIELD** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- STETSON CONFERENCE CENTER** West Tower, Exhibit Level
- STETSONS MODERN STEAK + SUSHI** East Tower, Lobby Level
- TORONTO** (International and City Suites) West Tower, Ballroom Level
- WATER TOWER** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level
- WEST TOWER VALET** West Tower, Exhibit Level
- WRIGHT** (Founders Suites) West Tower, Third Floor
- WRIGLEY** (Landmark Suites) West Tower, Concourse Level

EAST TOWER

SKYWAY LEVEL Blue Level

LOBBY LEVEL Green Level

CONCOURSE LEVEL Bronze Level

BALLROOM LEVEL Gold Level

RIVERSIDE EXHIBIT LEVEL Purple Level

WEST TOWER

THIRD FLOOR Silver Level

FOUNDERS SUITES

THE GALLERY COLLECTION

CRYSTAL FOYER

CRYSTAL BALLROOM

LANDMARK SUITES

INTERNATIONAL AND CITY SUITES

STETSON CONFERENCE CENTER

SCAN FOR MOBILE MAP

- ELEVATORS
- ESCALATORS AND STAIRS
- RESTROOMS
- MOTHER'S ROOM

ESCALATORS, ELEVATORS AND RESTROOMS are indicated on each floor. Elevators are conveniently located throughout the hotel for guests with disabilities or where no escalator is present.

CROSSING BETWEEN TOWERS: Cross between towers via the Skybridge or the Concourse. You may also cross from the lobby level via the crosswalk on Stetson Drive.

NEA National Leadership Summit Speakers



Rebecca "Becky" Pringle

NEA President

Becky Pringle is president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest labor union. Becky is a middle school science teacher with more than three decades of classroom experience and has distinguished herself as a fierce social justice warrior and defender of educator rights.

NEA president Becky Pringle is an unrelenting advocate for all students and communities of color, and a valued and respected voice in the education arena. Becky is singularly focused on using her intellect, passion, and purpose to unite the members of the largest labor union with the entire nation, and using that collective power to fulfill the promise of public education.



Princess Moss

NEA Vice President

Princess R. Moss, an elementary music teacher from Louisa County, Va., is vice president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest labor union. Previously, Princess was NEA secretary-treasurer and had primary responsibility for managing and maintenance of the Association's multimillion dollar budget. At the local, state, and national levels, Princess is a respected, unwavering champion of children and public education. As vice president, she helps to guide the Association mission of fulfilling the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.



Noel Candelaria

NEA Secretary-Treasurer

Noel Candelaria, a special education teacher and former teacher's aide from El Paso, Texas, is the Secretary-Treasurer of the National Education Association, the nation's largest labor union. Noel ranks third among the Association's leadership team. His primary responsibility is managing and maintaining the Association's multimillion dollar budget.

Noel is the first-generation son of Mexican immigrants who instilled within him the value of a quality public education. As a result, Noel learned firsthand about the transformative power of public education, how the influence of one educator knows no limits, and that when woven together the two form a direct pathway toward the American Dream.

NEA National Leadership Summit Speakers



Eric Ward

Senior Advisor for the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Executive Vice President at Race Forward

Eric K. Ward is one of America's leading voices on the intersection of authoritarianism, hate-fueled violence, and the fight to sustain a multiracial, inclusive democracy. He serves as Executive Vice President of Race Forward and is a senior fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center. In a career spanning nearly 40 years, Eric made history in 2021, as the first American awarded the prestigious Civil Courage Prize. His bold, widely cited essay, "Skin in the Game: How Antisemitism Animates White Nationalism," helped reshape the national conversation on antisemitism and is considered a cornerstone in understanding the recent rise racial authoritarianism in the United States. Eric serves on the boards of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy and Auburn Theological Seminary.



Matthew Hawn

Tennessee Education Association and NEA member leader

On May 5, 2021, the same day the Tennessee General Assembly passed its divisive concepts bill, Sullivan County Schools dismissed Matthew for unprofessionalism and insubordination in discussing racial equity with his contemporary issues class. In that class, he assigned an article by Ta'Nehishi Coates after the January 6 insurrection and showed the poem "White Privilege" by Kyla Jenee Lacey in April of 2021. Matthew is the first tenured public-school teacher dismissed during this manufactured panic surrounding Critical Race Theory. His story has been featured in the NY Times, Washington Post, Ed Week, The Economist, CNN, CBS, Last Week Tonight with John Oliver, and many other media outlets. Because Matthew is a tenured teacher, the TN tenure law allows for a 3-step appeals process. After losing the first two appeals, Matthew, represented by TEA attorneys Virginia McCoy, Richard Colbert, and Sarah Ingalls, won the appeal in the Sullivan County Chancery Court in December 2024. However, the Sullivan County BOE appealed that decision, and he is currently awaiting a decision from the East TN Court of Appeals.



Dr. Maria Stephan

Co-Lead and Chief Organizer of the Horizons Project

Dr. Maria J. Stephan is the Co-lead and Chief Organizer of the Horizons Project, where she works to strengthen connections and collective action across U.S. pro-democracy movements. An award-winning author and organizer, her research centers on nonviolent movements advancing human rights, democracy, and peace. Previously, she held senior roles at the U.S. Institute of Peace, U.S. State Department, Atlantic Council, and International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, supporting activists, policymakers, and social movements worldwide. Stephan has taught at Georgetown and American University, holds degrees from Boston College and Tufts University, and is an active advisor, trainer, and civic leader based in New York City.



Christina Rivera

Founder of Called to Justice

As a Boricua Chicana, Christina Rivera's Call to Justice began as a child in the barrios and valleys of Los Angeles. Christina was the first Latina elected to the Unitarian Universalist Association's Board of Trustees. In 2017 she received national news coverage for exposing racism in hiring decisions at the UUA. In 2017 she was also on the front-lines of organizers protesting the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville Virginia. She was a founding member and is now Co-President of Congregate Charlottesville. In 2018 she founded and serves as Executive Director of Called to Justice, a community organizing non-profit, which exists to cultivate, connect, and sustain communities committed to liberation, equity, and justice.



GENERAL INFORMATION

The content of this program book and the Summit breakout sessions may be subject to change. Please download the Summit app for updates throughout the Summit.

State Connection Sessions For Leadership Development

FRIDAY, MARCH 13– 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm CT

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 – 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm CT

The purpose of these sessions is to provide leaders with a space to engage with attendees from their respective states. The sessions reinforce the Summit's objectives, facilitate networking opportunities, and offer time for brainstorming and planning for ongoing leadership development after the Summit concludes.

Caucus and Council Meetings

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 – 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm CT

The Summit offers participants an opportunity to attend sessions facilitated by leaders of several NEA caucuses and councils, during which they share information about the purpose of the caucus and council leveraging the shared interests of members across multiple communities, interests, and identities.

Summit Social Engagement and Extended Learning Opportunities

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 – 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm CT

Get ready for a fun-filled evening in the heart of Chicago! Whether you're hitting the dance floor to show off your moves, grabbing a friend to attend the social, or stopping in for the documentary screening, there's something for everyone.

NEA Governance Policy Resource Center

Prior to the Summit, attendees were invited to a pre-Summit webinar, led by chairs of three of NEA's internal policy mechanisms: the NEA Strategic Plan and Budget Committee, Legislative Committee, and Resolutions Committee. These committees provide an opportunity for direct member input which shapes the direction of the union. Even if you missed the webinar, you can still add your voice. Visit the NEA Policy Resource Center online at www.nea.org/policyresourcecenter to access key policy documents like the Resolutions, Legislative Program, and biennial Strategic Plan and Budget, all developed with member input and adopted by the NEA Representative Assembly. The site also offers background on standing NEA committees responsible for policy review and revision. Additionally, the platform enables direct communication with

committee leaders, allowing you to ask questions, share ideas, and recommend changes to Association positions and activities.

Help Build Our Leadership Brand Via Social Media!



During and after the Summit, help us to amplify our impact by sharing your experience on social media platforms. Be sure to include the hashtags: #EdLeaders and #NEASummit. When you share, you broaden our reach and help increase awareness of the Summit.

Summit Facebook Page & edCommunities Group (NEA Leadership Summit Activists)

As a Summit participant, you now have access to two virtual communities that allow you to expand your experience, network, get support, and continue your leadership journey beyond the Summit.

The "NEA Leadership Summit Activist" is a virtual community on NEA's learning experience platform, otherwise known as edCommunities. To join, visit: www.mynea360.org and search for "NEA Leadership Summit Activists".

Developing Leaders Facebook group

We have also created a group for past and future Summit participants on Facebook. This is a closed group, "NEA Summit Leaders." We invite you to request to join – facebook.com/groups/neasummitleaders

Photography, Audio, Video Recordings

Photography, audio, and video recordings will be taking place in the NEA National Leadership Summit space for journalistic and NEA marketing purposes. By your presence, you are consenting to the use of your likeness for these stated purposes.

MEETING DISCLAIMER

By attending this meeting, you confirm that you are NEA staff or an invited guest. The information shared during this session is intended solely for your use in your capacity as a member or staff participant.

This presentation and its contents are confidential and may not be distributed, shared, published, or reproduced—whether in whole or in part—by any means or in any form, without prior written consent from the presenter. Audio/video recording, copying of slides, and the use of AI-powered note-taking tools are strictly prohibited unless expressly authorized in writing by the presenter. Violation of these terms may result in legal action.

We appreciate your assistance in creating and maintaining a safe and respectful space for sharing ideas and diverse perspectives. Please remain aware of your surroundings during the meeting. If you observe anyone recording, copying slides, or otherwise violating these guidelines, immediately alert Cory Wofford, cwofford@nea.org.

Thank you for helping us maintain a collaborative and secure environment where all voices can be heard and respected.



Leadership Competencies

To learn more about the framework, download the NEA Leadership Competency Guide at nea.org/leadership-development.



NEA Leadership Development Vision

We want to support you on your leadership journey!

The vision of the NEA Center for Governance Leadership Development Team is to deepen the Association's collective understanding of leadership development and what it means to be a "NEA Leader." We view the development of education activists and leaders as a major strategy for enhancing organizational capacity throughout the NEA. We will know it has been successful when it has accomplished the following:

1. NEA has a defined leadership brand that equips educators to lead and create systemic change in public education.
2. The NEA Leadership Competency Framework has been adopted and integrated at every level of the Association.
3. The development of leaders is embedded into every action, campaign, conference, convening, program and project.
4. We have shepherded the creation of leadership development system throughout the association.

Where to turn for Leadership Development Resources

nea.org/leadership-development

Log on and find resources and programs through the leadership development resources site to access these and other resources to support you in your leadership journey.

Leadership Competency Self-Assessment(s)

The NEA Leadership Competency Self-Assessments were designed to help NEA leaders identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Individuals are strongly encouraged to take the self-assessment(s) as often as they like or need to identify the areas in which they want to grow. To access the self-assessments, visit nea.org/pep.

Personal Leadership Development Guide (Template)

The Personal Leadership Development Guide (template) is intended for individual educators who are curious about their leadership and are ready to start their journey towards self-awareness to become stronger Association leaders (elected or non-elected) and stronger professionals. here is a downloadable and fillable PDF of the template at nea.org/leadership-development.

Teacher Leadership Competencies

The NEA Teacher Leadership competencies, developed for the Teacher Leadership Institute, are a resource for identification, reflection, guidance, and inspiration for classroom practitioners. The NEA Leadership Competency Framework was used in the development of these competencies which can be used as guideposts for professional growth. Teacher Leadership Competencies.

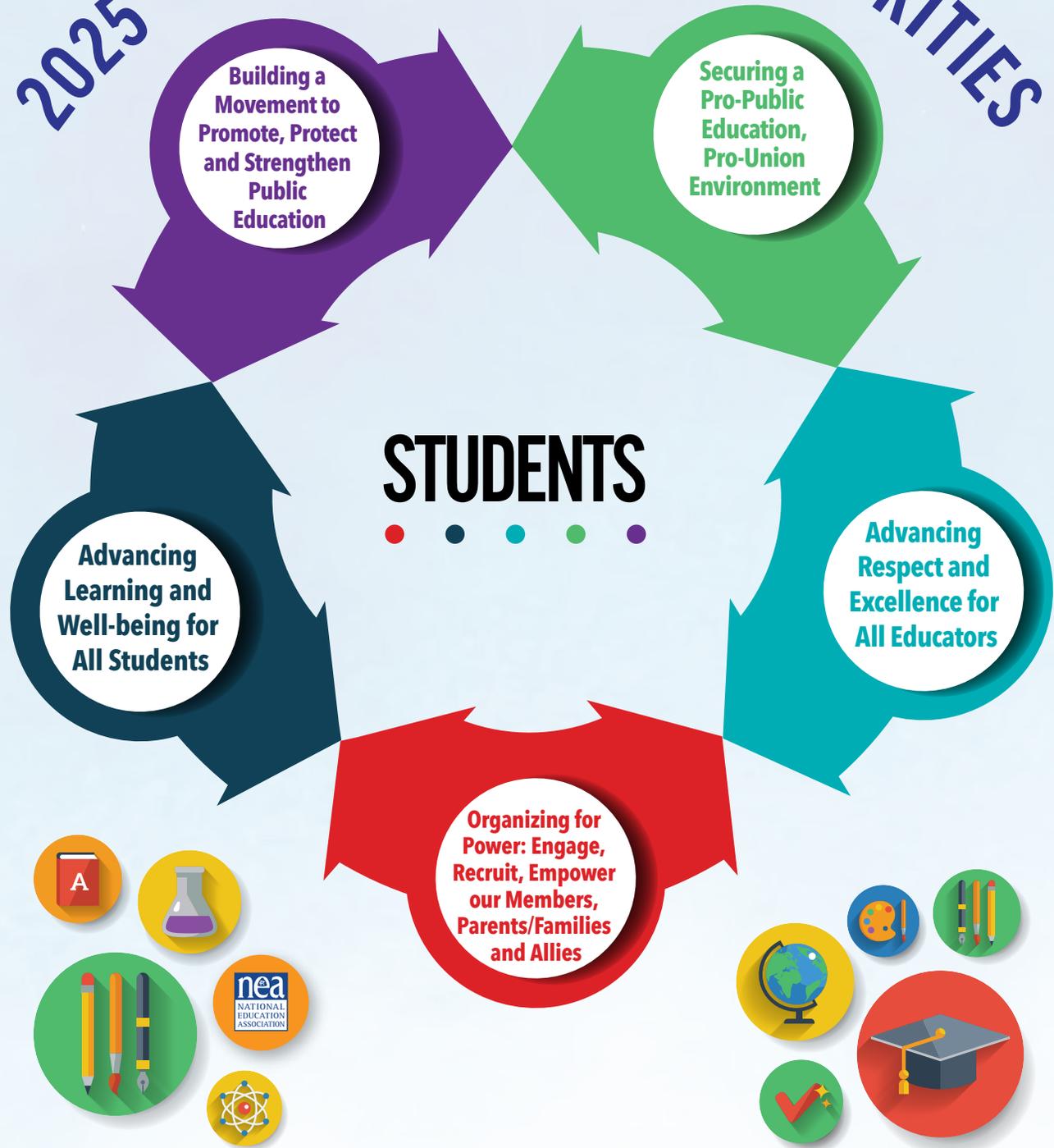
nea.org/resource-library/nea-teacher-leadership-competencies-foundational-competencies

Education Support Professional (ESP) Professional Growth Continuum

The Professional Growth Continuum serves as a 'map' of how Education Support Professionals (ESP) can grow professionally, by bridging the gap between current practice and a vision for a system of support that recognizes ESP as vital partners in student success. The NEA Leadership Competency Framework serves as a foundation for, and aligns with, the PGC to define the ESP the competencies they need to begin to accelerate their professional growth. ESP Professional Growth Continuum. nea.org/professional-excellence/professional-learning/esps/continuum



2025 - 2026 NEA'S VISION PRIORITIES



NEA's Vision Priorities 2025–2026

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**.

Though all of the priorities are important, the 2026 Summit will have an intentional focus on Organizing for Power. WE MUST ORGANIZE FOR POWER TO...

- Create a public education system that is safe, just, welcoming and prepares every student to succeed; where every educator is respected and has what they need
- Create an economy where one job is enough to create a good life, where all workers are treated with dignity
- Create a democracy that delivers for everyone, not just the privileged few

Priority Area: 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.

Priority Area: 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.

Priority Area: 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.

Priority Area: 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.

Priority Area: Securing and Supporting a Pro-Public Education, Pro-Union, Environment

Work in 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 Sessions (To Advance NEA's Strategic Vision Priorities 2025–26)

Friday March 13, 2026 • 2:00–4:00 p.m. CT

Five concurrent sessions, each focused on increasing awareness of NEA's strategic priorities

Hope Floats: Anchoring Racial and Social Justice in the Floods of Authoritarianism

This interactive session will provide training for leaders to help them understand how attacks on inclusive education and just, equitable schools are interconnected. Session partner can expect to learn how to strengthen messaging and lead on this issue with power. During this session, participants will practice how to better engage with members, leaders and staff to enhance our capacity to organize ourselves and take action together to win safe, just and equitable schools.

Learning Lead(s): Hilario Benzon, Gabriel Tanglao

Location: Grand Hall I

Organizing for Power - Using an ESP Bill of Rights Campaign to Identify, Engage, and Grow Powerful Union Leaders

The ESP Bill of Rights is more than a document—it's a powerful organizing tool that helps identify and cultivate leaders, build collective power, and mobilize ESPs to win the wages, benefits, and respect they deserve.

States and locals across the country are transforming their unions, schools, and districts through intentional engagement and organizing led by ESP members for fellow ESP members. Join us to learn how an ESP Bill of Rights campaign can be used to identify and engage ESP member leaders and hone their organizing and advocacy skills with a focus on the NEA Leadership Competencies and ESP Bill of Rights framework.

Learning Lead(s): Amber Parker, Lisa Connor, Tess Van Schepen

Location: Grand Hall K

Meeting the Moment by Building Power in Your Local

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. This session will explore building power in all membership categories to meet the moment in our country. Participants will use tools and resources from NEA's Year-Round Organizing program to assess the readiness of their local and/or affiliate to be action ready and work to fight for public education. Examples and documents will be shared to help prioritize and move the work.

Learning Lead: Vicki C. Rodriguez

Location: Grand Hall J

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

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!

Learning Lead: Elic Senter

Location: Grand Hall L

Standing Up to Authoritarianism: Advancing Skills to Meet the Moment

Our political climate is continuing to make school board elections critical for promoting, protecting, and 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. This 201 training by Freedom Trainers (freedomtrainers.net) intended to build upon introductions provided in their previous trainings on the authoritarian playbook, the role of civil resistance movements in countering it, and the basics of noncooperation movements. We will draw on strategies and tactics used by movements across the world to fight authoritarianism, as well as ways these skills and tactics are being applied at home.

Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will understand how to:

- Examine the authoritarian threat
- Learn how noncooperation works, with stories and examples
- Practice using real life scenarios and plan how you can engage at the local level
- Use those skills to understand how we can engage with others in peaceful noncooperation
- Learn where you can find additional resources to support your efforts at the local level

Learning Lead: Mary Kusler

Location: Grand Hall MN

State Connection Session Locations

STATE	ROOM	STATE	ROOM	STATE	ROOM
Alabama	Roosevelt 1A	Kentucky	Randolph 2	North Dakota	Michigan 1C
Alaska	Horner	Louisiana	Soldier Field	Ohio	Regency Ballroom A
Arizona	Grand Hall H	Maine	Ogden	Oklahoma	Michigan 2
Arkansas	Roosevelt 1B	Maryland	Toronto	Oregon	Michigan 1B
California	Crystal Ballroom B	Massachusetts	Haymarket	Pennsylvania	Regency Ballroom B
Colorado	Randolph 1B	Michigan	Michigan 3	Rhode Island	Hong Kong
Connecticut	Field	Minnesota	Water Tower	South Carolina	Soldier Field
Delaware	DuSable	Mississippi	Soldier Field	South Dakota	Stetson D
Federal	Roosevelt 3B	Missouri	Gold Coast	Tennessee	Wright
Florida	Cominsky	Montana	Stetson E	Texas	Regency Ballroom C
Georgia	Grand Hall G	Nebraska	Burnham	Utah	Stetson FG
Hawaii	Addams	Nevada	New Orleans	Vermont	Picasso
Idaho	Roosevelt 3A	New Hampshire	Michigan 1A	Virginia	Grand Hall J
Illinois	Acapulco	New Jersey	Crystal Ballroom C	Washington	Grand Hall I
Indiana	Crystal Ballroom A	New Mexico	McCormick	West Virginia	Randolph 3
Iowa	Columbian	New York	San Francisco	Wisconsin	Regency Ballroom D
Kansas	Wrigley	North Carolina	Randolph 1A	Wyoming	Stetson BC

Caucus and Councils Engagements

CAUCUS/COUNCIL	ROOM
National Council for Education Support Professions (NCESP)	Regency Ballroom D
National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)	Hong Kong
National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA)	Crystal Ballroom C
NEA American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus	Acapulco
NEA Asian & Pacific Islander Caucus	San Francisco
NEA Black Caucus	Crystal Ballroom B
NEA Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ Caucus	Regency Ballroom C
NEA Hispanic Caucus	Regency Ballroom B
NEA Aspiring Educators	Grand Hall I
NEA Women's Caucus	Regency Ballroom A
NEA-Retired	Grand Hall MN



Reflection Sheet – 1

Friday, March 13, 2026

Jot down your notes and ah-has. Let's start putting together your Leadership Journey.

Session Title _____

What perspectives or strategies from today's sessions can you use to:

- Enhance your role as an advocate for educators and students, particularly in regard to NEA's priorities?

- Support and expand the efforts of your state and local affiliate leadership?

What steps can you take to maintain and grow relationships built today to ensure ongoing collaboration and support within your state?

Amplify Your Voice – Share your experience using our social media platforms.



NEA Summit Leaders



#NEASummit #EdLeaders

Session Descriptions | Block 1 | SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 8:15–10:15AM CT

ADVOCACY: Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members' professional needs and rights.

ADV100 Advocacy Isn't Optional: Equipping Educators to Lead Change Now

Roosevelt 1B Educators must move beyond the classroom to defend public education and democracy. This session helps participants shift from observers to advocates by using personal testimony, collective organizing, and systemic action. Grounded in the NEA Leadership Competencies, educators will gain tools to build advocacy pipelines within their locals and communities.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jermaine Shakespeare

ADV101 Using AI to Amplify Union Voice and Action

Regency Ballroom B Step into the future of advocacy! This hands-on session shows how AI systems, paired with your individual strengths, can reframe your role, sharpen your message, and amplify your impact—empowering you to drive meaningful change in public education.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Karrie De Torres

ADV102 Bargaining for the Common Good (Part 1)

Regency Ballroom A Across the country, NEA affiliates are rethinking bargaining and advocacy and expanding their demands to include economic, social, and racial justice. This session focuses on strategies to build power and fight for the common good. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own unique circumstances and be challenged to consider how these strategies might be implemented in their locals to create impact in their schools and communities back home. ***This is part 1 of a 2-part session.***

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Brian Beallor, Greg LeRoy

ADV103 Beyond Your Wildest Dreams: A Practical Guide to Building Your Leadership Plan

New Orleans Leadership journeys often begin with small steps of advocacy and grow into unexpected opportunities. My path from educator to board member shows how growth in advocacy doesn't happen in isolation and builds on other leadership competencies like social-emotional intelligence, governance, and communication. In this interactive session, participants use a Leader Crosswalk template to set a SMART goal, map strengths, and design a pathway for leadership beyond their wildest dreams—no matter their role.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Christina Gordon

ADV104 Creating An Anti-Racism Taskforce at the Local Level

Hong Kong Want to learn how to build an Anti-Racism Taskforce that helps you build an anti-racism union? In this session, participants will learn a framework that requires active engagement to make concrete changes in racial inequities and to and to foster active and engaged anti-racist practices.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jariza Rodriguez



BLOCK 1 (CONTINUED)

ADVOCACY: Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members' professional needs and rights.

ADV105 Fostering Inclusive and Safe Workspaces: Empowering LGBTQ+ Educators and Allies at All Levels

Toronto This session will explore strategies and best practices for creating inclusive, safe, and supportive work environments. Participants will gain insights into the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ educators and learn how to foster a culture of belonging, respect, and equity. Through case studies, discussions, and practical tools, attendees will leave equipped to advocate for and implement policies that protect and value LGBTQ+ educators.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Lead(s): Frank Burger, Stacy Schmidt

ADV106 Running a Local PAC Drive

San Francisco Learn to create and execute a political action committee (PAC) fundraising program in your local with tools on how to set a goal, create a plan, ask for donations, and continue this legacy-building work into the future. This session will require listening, learning, and participation!

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Kari Coppersmith

ADV107 The Republican Educators Leadership Lab

Acapulco In an environment where conservative voices in education are often underrepresented, this workshop equips participants with the tools, strategies, and confidence to lead effectively within their unions. This leadership training is designed specifically for Republican educators and those interested in building advocacy skills to engage Republican members, as well as develop strategies to effectively advocate with Republican elected officials.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Susana O'Daniel, Jennifer Smith-Margraf

COMMUNICATION: Builds an integrated communications strategy that drives the goals of our professions.

COM100 How to Use Social Media to Engage Members and Allies

Grand Hall K Social media has become a common way for people share news, find information, and connect—and our members use it too. With 71% of Americans expressing trust in unions, we must present ourselves online as consistent voices. As misinformation spreads, our locals must be visible, active, and accessible across a variety of social platforms. This session will focus on how unions can use social media to intentionally engage members, connect with allies, and build a strong, trusted presence in our community.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Katie Lukins, Lindsay Ray; Hannah StClair; Elizabeth White

COM101 Power of Storytelling: Using Your Authentic Voice to Galvanize and Inspire

Grand Hall MN Everyone loves a good story, and educators have the best stories. Participants in this session will explore ways to use stories from their personal experiences as educators to help advance student success, public education, and the education professions. Session participants will gain a deeper understanding of how personal stories have the power to change attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, and win support for public education.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Brian Washington, Sundjata Sekou

COMMUNICATION: Builds an integrated communications strategy that drives the goals of our professions.

COM102 **Championing Every Student: Leadership Rooted in Race, Class, and Community Power (Part 1)**

Grand Hall J Does speaking in public send you into a panic? This session will help you master the fundamentals of being a great public speaker. Great for beginners or those who are looking to polish their skills, this session will help you beat the nerves, defeat the “umms,” and feel more comfortable speaking in front of audiences large and small.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Shawna Moore, Pamella Johnson, Michael Scott, Merwyn Scott

COM103 **That’s My Story and I’m Sticking to It! Using Message to Counter Disinformation**

Grand Hall L In a world where false information spreads fast, how we tell our story matters more than ever. This session will give you a fresh look at the values-driven messages that work, while also equipping you to push back when disinformation enters the conversation. Through real-world examples and practice, you’ll learn how to use powerful language that makes an impact. You’ll leave with practical tools to stay on message whether you talk to the press, post on social, or have one-on-one conversations.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Katie O’Connell, Tory Brown

COM104 **Voice With Vision to Lead with Precision**

Grand Hall I Effective leaders know that powerful communication inspires action. In this interactive session, participants will learn to adapt their message to diverse audiences, using strategies that build trust, spark engagement, and drive change. Through real-world scenarios, role-play, and peer feedback, leaders will leave with a personalized communication plan to advance their goals in education and advocacy.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Shana Middleton

COM105 **Media 101: Using News Media Fundamentals for Everyday Communication**

Grand Hall G Effective communication can inspire action, shift public opinion, influence contract bargaining, spark new ideas, or persuade audiences. The media amplifies your voice and broadcasts your message. In this session, participants will learn practical tips from pros on leveraging their credibility as educators to connect with audiences and gain support. They will walk away with foundational media skills that can be applied in everyday scenarios—no formal interview experience required.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Staci Maiers

GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP: Sets the mission and establishes strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving organization; empowers, motivates, and fosters a pipeline of talent for the future.

GOV100 **Covering Your Assets: Governing Documents in the Modern Political Environment**

Water Tower This session will highlight the process of how and why Virginia’s Fairfax Education Association modernized their governing documents, the strategic reasons behind the items leaders prioritized, and the structures they created. Participants will examine the strategies used for how the process was rolled out to engage members, and how the local tried to build consensus around the revisions. Participants will also examine the essential role collaboration with other NEA affiliates and legal counsel plays in this process.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Matthew Wallace



BLOCK 1 (CONTINUED)

GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP: Sets the mission and establishes strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving organization; empowers, motivates, and fosters a pipeline of talent for the future.

GOV101 From Basecamp to Summit: Building Student-Centered AI Policy and Sustainable Practices

Comiskey Discover how students and educators co-created AI rights and responsibilities to guide district policy. This interactive session, grounded in the governance and leadership domain, will equip leaders with strategies to embed equity, resilience, and respect into technology governance, while providing actionable tools to strengthen associations and defend public education and our democracy.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Chris Thomas, Kathryn Bellows, Dr. Heather Kellstrom, Isaac Thomas

GOV102 Professional Relationship Building: Bridging the Association and Administration at All Levels

Gold Coast Discover how students and educators co-created AI rights and responsibilities to guide district policy. This interactive session, grounded in the governance and leadership domain, will equip leaders with strategies to embed equity, resilience, and respect into technology governance, while providing actionable tools to strengthen associations and defend public education and our democracy.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Lisa Johnson, Chelsea Miles

GOV103 Turning Setbacks into Triumph: Reflection as a Practice of Resilience

Columbian Participants will deepen their understanding of distributive leadership by learning strategic advocacy skills and developing sustainable solutions to enhance educational communities. During this session, educators will engage in sharing experiences as educators, coaches, and leaders. Attendees will leave with renewed energy and actionable insights to combat burnout and drive positive change. This session promises to be a catalyst for revitalizing education through empowered leadership.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Angela Garcia

GOV104 The Human-Led Union: Leveraging AI as a Tool for Power*

Wrigley Join us for an inspiring session where you'll explore the world of artificial intelligence (AI) and its transformative potential. Participants will discover a variety of AI tools, discuss ethical considerations of AI, and learn innovative strategies to leverage AI for enhancing local initiatives. Whether you're looking to improve member services, streamline operations, or drive change, this workshop provides the insights and skills you need.

*Bring a device for interactive, hands-on practice throughout the session.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Angie Powers, Justin Thompson

GOV105 Leading Together: Lessons from MAE and AEA on Strategic Leadership Development

Haymarket Looking for a way to create a sustained approach to developing leaders? Join the Mississippi Association of Educators (MAE) and the Alabama Education Association (AEA) and learn how their cohort-based approach created a year-round, competency-based, leadership development program that is positioning leaders to lead and build organizational capacity.

Designed for Level 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Erica Jones, Pamela Fossett

LEADING OUR PROFESSION: Advocates for quality inside our professional and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP100 AI as a Thought Partner: Building Leadership, Equity, and Efficiency in Public Education

Roosevelt 1A In California's Anaheim Union High School District, AI is leveraged to strengthen leadership, deepen equity, and expand opportunities for students and families. This session highlights how AI can save educators time, enhance collaboration, and reimagine engagement. Through interactive activities, participants will explore how AI can support resilient leadership and leave with strategies to apply in their associations and communities.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tyler Sherman, Dang Vu

LOP101 Andragogy in Action: Building Equity and Partnerships That Last (Part 1)

Michigan 1A This session, co-designed by a non-profit organization and an educators' union, centers on andragogy—how adults learn through relevance, autonomy, and collaboration. Participants will explore equity-driven strategies that transform classrooms and communities, examine and unpack standards, and connect initiatives to school budgets, family engagement, and community partnerships. Gain access to replicable tools to address systemic inequities and foster sustainable, student-centered success nationwide.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tamar LaSure-Owens

LOP102 Building Collective Power and Counter-Narratives: Project MITTEN

Michigan 1B This presentation will highlight lessons learned about building sustainable coalitions between higher education, labor unions, and school districts in hostile political climates. The result is Project MITTEN: A three-pronged approach—diversifying teacher pipelines, enhancing cultural competency, and fostering mentorship, all of which serve as both immediate intervention and long-term movement building. 9 We can serve as sites of resistance and transformation rather than complicity with oppressive systems.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Annette Christiansen, Roland Coloma, Jeff Lisiecki, Karie Jorah, Tanesha Watkins

LOP103 Community School Implementation and Expansion

Randolph 1B This session aims to raise Community School awareness and further develop activists and leaders with the knowledge and skills relevant to leading strategic conversations with all interest-holder groups (students, all staff, parents/caregivers, and community members) about the importance of this strategy. This transformative and scalable approach harnesses local vision and priorities to build toward collective action that benefits entire communities.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Angelia Ebner, David Greenberg, Kelly McMahon, Azer "Nikki" Woodward

LOP104 Creating a Coaching Culture: Fostering Growth, Sparking Change, and Cultivating Future Leaders

Michigan 3 Coaching is an integral part of a professional association. It improves teaching, learning, involvement, and advocacy. This session will explore how to create a well-planned coaching system that is not one-size-fits-all, providing a framework for more productive and impactful work. We will discuss various coaching models and strategies to help members and leaders develop their practices, leading to increased advocacy and greater opportunities for future leaders.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Rebecca Hall



BLOCK 1 (CONTINUED)

LEADING OUR PROFESSION: Advocates for quality inside our profession and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP105 Critical Ethnic Studies as Teacher Leadership, Resistance, and Noncompliance in the Classroom (Part 1)

Randolph 1A How do educators combat coordinated attacks on teaching truth and develop strategies for resistance and noncompliance in their classrooms? Participants will hear how critical ethnic studies provides educators in St. Paul, MN, an opportunity to examine, dream, plan, and execute teaching truth to students. Participants will also outline their own strategy for resistance, noncompliance, and teaching truth in their classrooms. *This is part 1 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Kimberly Colbert, Cassandra Sheppard

LOP106 Using the Model Code of Educators in Everyday ESP Work (Part 1)

Michigan 2 Education Support Professionals (ESP) are the heartbeat of every school system. Whether keeping students safe, supporting instruction, or maintaining essential operations, ESPs shape the conditions that make learning possible. Yet ESPs are often asked to navigate complex situations without formal guidance on ethical decision-making, boundaries, or professional expectations.

This session provides ESPs with a practical, easy-to-use framework for ethical professionalism—one that protects students, strengthens workplace relationships, and elevates the status of ESPs as essential educators. Participants will walk away empowered, confident, and better equipped to handle the real challenges they face every day. *This is part 1 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Loranzo Andrews, Audrey Nichols

LOP107 Mentoring for Mastery: The Importance of Quality Mentorship

Michigan 1C Quality mentorship, in both the classroom and the union, helps strengthen the profession and union. In this session, participants will learn different strategies to help integrate Aspiring Educators into your classroom and Early Career Educators into your building and district.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Matthew Callahan, Jasmine Meadows

LOP108 Powering Up PLCs: Advancing Fair and Justice-Oriented Assessment for Every Learner

Randolph 3 As education leaders, how can we ensure assessment supports all students? This session will equip educators with effective strategies, like professional learning communities (PLC) to examine assessment practices through a fairness and justice lens, prioritize meaningful classroom assessment over external assessment, and elevate student learning. Through collaborative learning and discussion, participants will expand their assessment literacy and identify practical structures and practices to shift assessment toward equity and opportunity.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Caroline Wylie, Christine DonFrancesco

LOP109 You Are Resilient!: Using the NEA Leadership Competency Framework to Maximize Your Own Power and Lead

Randolph 2 This session introduces the *NEA Leadership Competency Framework*, offering an overview of all seven competencies, with an emphasis on “Leading Our Professions.” Participants who complete the NEA leadership self-assessment before the Summit will use their results to identify an area of interest for professional growth; an in-session alternative will be available for those who need it. This session highlights the value of setting meaningful professional goals, anticipating challenges, overcoming those challenges, and supporting the development of others. By exploring these practices, participants strengthen their own leadership skills while deepening their capacity to guide and elevate their profession.

Learning Lead(s): Lori Hardee, Kimberly Johnson

ORGANIZING: Mobilizes to influence successful organizing outcomes, strengthen internal and external relationships, and membership capacity; recruit and identify new members and potential leaders in the Association.

ORG100 Building a Bold, Inclusive Future: Leadership Pathways for Aspiring Educators of Color

Grand Hall H The future of education relies on diverse leadership in our unions. Learn strategies to recruit and retain Aspiring Educators (AEs) of color, dismantle barriers, and build inclusive union networks with leadership pathways that help AEs thrive as future union leaders.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jessica Bailey, Stephanie Chavez

ORG102 Don't Dismiss Me: Seats at the Tables, Strategies to Recruit, Engage, and Empower BIPOC Members (Part 1)

Crystal Ballroom C This session highlights best practices and intentional strategies for recruiting and engaging members of color in our unions as a pathway to building organizational power. Two states—New Jersey and Indiana—have used innovative approaches. Through intentional one-to-one conversations, creating affinity spaces, and culturally responsive organizing, participants will learn skills to develop strategies that build trust and empower educators of color as leaders in their unions. *This is part 1 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): LaQuita Maxey, Eric Jones, Wafa Safi Hassan

ORG103 Educators for Strong Schools: Engaging Members with Public School Strong

Crystal Ballroom A *Educators for Strong Schools* is a program designed to build robust community partnerships and local affiliates that are powerful enough to advocate for fully funded, equitable public education systems. Leveraging the NEA Leadership Competency Framework, participants will acquire the skills to enhance member engagement, cultivate authentic community collaborations, analyze policy intersections with race, equity, and labor, as well as develop sustainable local groups. *This session is created for educators prepared to lead education justice movements.*

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Lead(s): Michael Carvella

ORG104 Organizing to WIN: One Site at a Time

Picasso To build the movement to protect public education and build the capacity of the union we need leaders with organizing skills. This session is geared toward Level 1 leaders who want to understand the theory, research, and practice of how to utilize one-to-one conversations to build relationships, identify leaders, and map worksites. *This session is created for educators prepared to lead education justice movements.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Lead(s): Justin Johnson

ORG105 Union Mentorship as a Lifeline for New Educators

Regency Ballroom C To build the movement to protect public education and build the capacity of the union we need leaders with organizing skills. This session is geared toward Level 1 leaders who want to understand the theory, research, and practice of how to utilize one-to-one conversations to build relationships, identify leaders, and map worksites.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Lead(s): Rachael Poppe



BLOCK 1 (CONTINUED)

ORGANIZING: Mobilizes to influence successful organizing outcomes, strengthen internal and external relationships, and membership capacity; recruit and identify new members and potential leaders in the Association.

ORG106 May Day 2028: Educators Join the Movement

Crystal Ballroom B This introductory workshop connects NEA and the National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) members to the historic May Day 2028 call from United Auto Workers (UAW) President Shawn Fain and the broader labor movement. Participants will explore why 14 educators—even without aligned contract dates—have a critical role in building worker power against billionaire interests and learn how their locals can begin preparing for participation.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Lead(s): Wil Page, Shannon Rasmussen, Alfonso Salais, June Prakash, Michael Evans, Brent Bergstrom, Janet Caldwell

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: Understands the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that create healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals; demonstrates ability to feel and show empathy, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions.

SEI100 Am I Ok? Cultivating Calm in the Chaos

Wright Educators are expected to be polite, positive, and productive—even when facing personal or professional challenges. In this session, participants will reflect on the emotional toll of these expectations and learn about tools to navigate them. Participants will also explore common stressors and triggers, complete a self-assessment of their emotional regulation practices, and engage in breath-work, mindfulness, and self-reflection activities. Attendees will leave with strategies to maintain professionalism and support student success, even amid chaos.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Janaya Foster, Taraja Shephard Allen

SEI101 Increasing Educator Agency and Resilience to Promote Meaningful Change

Regency Ballroom D Education leaders face immense challenges that can cloud clarity and direction. This session offers a fresh mindset that will help participants lead with clarity, confidence, and purpose. Together, participants will examine the unexamined assumptions that shape current conditions, harnessing curiosity to meet the challenges in ways that preserve well-being while activating individual and collective potential.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jay Schroder

SEI102 Navigating Chaos with Calm: Leading with Clarity in Challenging Times (State Presidents Only, Part 1)

Field When leaders face unexpected challenges, calm clarity means the difference between breakdown and breakthrough. Transform pressure into performance with this interactive session for leaders who refuse to let stress derail success. Learn neuroscience-based techniques to stay calm, think clearly, and make strategic decisions when it matters most. Through coaching exercises and real-world applications, master leading with composure and turn chaos into breakthrough results. *This is part 1 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Andrea Walker



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: Understands the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that create healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals; demonstrates ability to feel and show empathy, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions.

SEI103 Mitigating Leadership Identification Bias

McCormick It is a well-accepted fact that leader identification is part of what makes leaders effective. But what if our leadership identification practices are getting in the way? What if our biases and mindset about who leads—and how—are narrowing our views? In this session, participants will delve into three common leadership beliefs and learn how these concepts may not only limit who receives leadership opportunities but also create a vicious cycle of chaos that contributes to organizational dysfunction.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Dominic F. Padilla

SEI104 Repairing the Harm: Leading with Accountability and Empathy in Predominantly White Spaces

Addams In predominantly white schools and locals, white-identifying educators have a responsibility to lead with a racial and social justice lens. This session offers restorative approaches for responding to harm—especially around race, identity, and equity. Participants will learn social and emotional leadership skills and practice how to “call in,” make effective apologies, and repair trust with a focus on building resilient, inclusive communities.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Stephanie Hendrix

SEI105 Respectfully Resist: The Neuroscience and Key Insights on Respect and Disrespect, and the Tools and Techniques You Need to De-Escalate Upset and Conflict

DuSable Aligned with the NEA’s social and emotional intelligence domain, and designed to support its interlinked priorities, including advancing respect, excellence, and support for all educators, this highly informative, interactive, and experiential two-hour breakout session provides participants with information about the neuroscience of respect and disrespect, the importance of respect in relationships, and tools and techniques that support the de-escalation and management of situations where respect is compromised or lacking.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Gregg Ward

STRATEGY AND FISCAL HEALTH: Builds the brand and accomplishes the goals of the Association through effective financial management and understanding of fiduciary responsibilities.

SFH100 Getting Started with AutoPay: Tools, Tips and Skills for Smooth Dues Collection

Burnham AutoPay is a powerful tool that allows members to pay dues automatically through credit card or EFT/ACH, helping streamline collections and improve retention. This session is designed for those setting up AutoPay for the first time or supporting members through the transition. Gain helpful insights on what works and pitfalls to avoid, ensuring your affiliate has a successful AutoPay launch.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Courtney Hatfield

SFH101 SWOT Analysis: An Essential Tool in Your Strategic Planning Toolbox

Ogden Want to level up your leadership to have a lasting impact on your local? This interactive session teaches you how to design and conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis—a key component to good strategic planning in your association. This session is designed to help local association leaders bring better alignment, focus, and member value to their union’s work.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Leigh Kennedy



BLOCK 1 (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY AND FISCAL HEALTH: Builds the brand and accomplishes the goals of the Association through effective financial management and understanding of fiduciary responsibilities.

SFH102 Fiduciary Responsibilities and Association Policies to Support an Ethical Culture

Horner Understand the fiduciary responsibilities that all leaders are legally obligated to perform on behalf of the association and its members to be good stewards of the association's reputation and assets. Gain knowledge about how to conduct an executive session during board meetings. Learn how a code of ethical conduct, conflict of interest, and whistle-blower policies, as well as an audit committee, promote an ethical culture and deters fraud.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Rodney Rowe, Paula Purdy

SFH103 Guardian of the Funds: A Fiduciary Adventure

Stetson FG Join the ranks of financial superheroes in "Guardians of the Funds: A Fiduciary Adventure!" This fun, engaging session will equip teacher association members with the knowledge and tools to fulfill their fiduciary duties confidently. Learn how to protect your organization's resources, spot red flags, and make sound financial decisions—all while embracing your inner guardian.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tanya T. Coats, Joe Crabtree

SFH104 A Coalition for Retirement Security

Stetson E Join us in developing NEA leaders who are learning about pensions and the work of pension trustees. We must ensure the future of our retirement plans through succession planning, with attention to the fiscal health of our pension systems and support for those who are entrusted as fiduciaries to protect these plans. Take the next steps on how we can defend and promote our pension systems through data-driven conversations, as we seek to further engage stakeholders on pension health and stability.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Kimberly Adams, Andrew Hirshman

BOARD ONLY SESSION (NOTE: For NEA Board of Directors Only)

BOD100 NEA Directors: Roles, Responsibilities, & Resources before, during, and after the NEA Representative Assembly

Plaza Ballroom B As an NEA Director, your role at the NEA Representative Assembly carries distinct responsibilities that extend beyond the event itself. This session will equip participants with tools to enhance collaboration with other leaders and support delegates throughout their year-long journey. Designed for both new and experienced NEA Directors, Directors from different sized states, and for state and at-large Directors, this interactive session provides essential tools and resources, outlines clear expectations, and ensures you are prepared to lead, engage, and empower delegates at every stage of their involvement.

Learning Lead(s): Brian Skinner, Paula Merrigan, Hannah St. Clair, Kathy Simpler, Nicole Prevost, Denise Lake, Charles Wilson, III

Reflection Sheet – 2

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Session Title _____

By the end of this session, I will....

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

AH-HAS: What are your key takeaways?

How will I use this training to advance my leadership or support the growth of other leaders?

Amplify Your Voice – Share your experience using our social media platforms.



NEA Summit Leaders



#NEASummit #EdLeaders



Session Descriptions | Block 2 | SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1:00–3:00PM CT

ADVOCACY: Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members' professional needs and rights.

ADV200 Know Your Rights: Leading for Immigration Justice and Organizing for Safe Zone Resolutions

Toronto Every student, whether they were born here or brought here, deserves the opportunity to learn without fear and distress—knowing they belong. This session will explore how leaders are advocating for and defending immigrant rights. This session will also show how member activists can lead and organize efforts to encourage schools and school districts to adopt a Safe Zones policy that outlines what educators and staff should do if ICE attempts to engage in immigration enforcement.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Hilario Benzon, Lubna Alam

ADV201 Bargaining for the Common Good (Part 2)

Regency Ballroom A Across the country, NEA affiliates are rethinking bargaining and advocacy and expanding their demands to include economic, social, and racial justice. This session focuses on strategies to build power and fight for the common good. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own unique circumstances and be challenged to consider how these strategies might be implemented in their locals to create impact in their schools and communities back home. *This is part 2 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Brian Beallor

ADV202 Have You Communicated with Your School Nurses Lately? The Heartbeat of Health in Schools

New Orleans Let's get the school nurses out of the health office and into union and educational discussions. This session will provide information on the significant role of school nurses in the educational space. How can participants in this session learn to do this? By deepening their understanding of school health services, why it is important to have school nurses address health care needs, how nurses assist in addressing chronic absenteeism, and help to meet federal requirements under IDEA and 504 plan development.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Sheila Caldwell

ADV203 Leadership Opportunities to Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Acapulco This session will discuss how leaders can enhance the impact of ongoing litigation concerning the current federal administration's influence over DEI-related teaching, research, and programs. NEA has ongoing litigation challenging the Department of Education's application of Title VI to DEI programming, as well as challenges to anti-DEI legislation at the state level. Participants will learn how to advocate for the preservation of DEI-related programs and teaching at their educational institution.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Stacy Hickox

ADV204 Speak Up and Speak Out: Learn to be an Advocacy Champion for Your Students, Colleagues and Community

Regency Ballroom C The politics of the moment show us that our country is fragile and if we don't fight for our rights and what's important to us, we can lose them. We must speak up and speak out about those issues that are most important to our members, the students they teach, and the communities in which they live.

Participants in this session will learn the strategies for meeting with and building relationships with elected officials at all levels of government to further their goals and advocate for their union and school..

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Kimberly Trinca, Meg Gruber, Ronny Lau

ADVOCACY: Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members' professional needs and rights.

ADV205 Mobilizing Communities to Advocate for Marginalized Students: Regalia Rights as a Model

Roosevelt 1B This session guides educational leaders to mobilize and advocate for marginalized students, using Indigenous students' right to wear tribal regalia at public ceremonies as a powerful example. Participants will learn how coalition-building, community empowerment, and strategic advocacy advance equity and social justice. Attendees will develop practical skills to lead inclusive efforts to defend student rights, engaging diverse stakeholders, and creating lasting systemic change in education.

Design for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jordan Bright Trail Woman Lankford

ADV206 Planning for Electoral Success: Winning in 2026!

Regency Ballroom B During this session, participants will hear from the NEA Campaigns and Elections team, who will guide them on how to develop winning electoral campaigns. This session will cover overall campaign strategies and tactics and delve into best practices learned from previous election cycles.

Design for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Brandon Rettke

ADV207 See Educators (like YOU!) Run for Public Office

Hong Kong Electing NEA members on the local, state, and federal level is crucial to our success in creating the schools our students and educators deserve. This session is targeted at leaders who are interested in running for public office. Participants will learn how to craft a one-minute vision statement, examine the core components of what it takes to run for public office, and review the steps to take before kicking off a successful campaign.

Designed for Level 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Meighan Davis, Amber Holland

ADV208 The Politic of the Curl: Confronting Hair Discrimination in Schools

San Francisco This session will examine how hair discrimination is deeply political, rooted in systemic racism, and directly tied to the fight for justice in our schools. Participants will explore the history of Black hair as both a site of resilience, resistance, and joy, as well as uncover how vague policies around "professionalism," "neatness," or "distraction" perpetuate exclusion. Dismantling hair discrimination is more than an equity issue; it is essential for public education as a democratic institution for all.

Design for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Linda Miller, Lateefah Scott

COMMUNICATION: Builds an integrated communications strategy that drives the goals of our professions.

COM200 Boomers, Xers, Millennials, and Zers, Oh My!: Exploring Ways to Use Situational Savvy While Leading

Grand Hall L In this session, participants will utilize photos, music, and movement to explore their generational identity. They will create a visual narrative using identity maps to develop insights on their thoughts, feelings, opinions, and biases regarding generations in the workplace. This session will help participants understand how they can utilize the Situational Leadership Model to connect, communicate, and lead multiple generations.

Design for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Katreca Neale, Angela Addison-Void



Block 2 (continued)

COMMUNICATION: Builds an integrated communications strategy that drives the goals of our professions.	
COM201 Media 101: Using News Media Fundamentals for Everyday Communication	
<i>Grand Hall G</i>	<p>Effective communication can inspire action, shift public opinion, influence contract bargaining, spark new ideas, or persuade audiences. The media amplifies your voice and broadcasts your message. In this session, participants will learn practical tips from pros on leveraging their credibility as educators to connect with audiences and gain support. They will walk away with foundational media skills that can be applied in everyday scenarios—no formal interview experience required.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Eric Jotkoff, Brian Washington</p>
COM202 Championing Every Student: Leadership Rooted in Race, Class, and Community Power (Part 2)	
<i>Grand Hall J</i>	<p>To lead in our unions and schools, we must ensure every student is seen, heard, and valued in their full identity. At a time when right-wing politicians and billionaire-backed allies try to divide us for power and profit, we must lead with courage. This session offers tools for relational organizing and hard conversations about race, class, and gender—so we can build coalitions, center shared values, and champion students through collective leadership. <i>This part 2 of a 2-part session.</i></p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Shawna Moore, Pamela Johnson, Michael Scott, Merwyn Scott</p>
COM203 Social Media for Building Union Power	
<i>Grand Hall I</i>	<p>With 226 million Americans on social media, the union can unlock its potential to share its vision and leverage power. Join this dynamic session to explore digital storytelling, discover your online voice as an educator, and navigate evolving platforms. Gain insights from our digital experts and best practices for platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and whatever Twitter is called these days. Participants will learn to amplify their advocacy through digital organizing.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Sydney Slifka, Justin Conley</p>
COM204 Technology and Storytelling for Advocacy	
<i>Grand Hall K</i>	<p>This session equips educators with digital storytelling skills to amplify their voices, reclaim respect, and advocate for public education. Participants will practice using social media, Canva, and short-form storytelling to counter misinformation and engage communities.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Madalyn Wilson</p>
COM205 SILENCE IS NOT AN OPTION: From Reporting to Restoring and Rebuilding Trust in School	
<i>Grand Hall MN</i>	<p>This session helps educators reclaim agency and voice in systems that reward silence. Through embodied practice, narrative reframing, and decision-making tools, participants will learn to disrupt “villain-victim-helpless” stories, practice relational repair, and apply a reflection matrix for advocacy with mindful listening, group work, and role-play. Participants leave with tools for building trust, equity, and leadership.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Soyoung Chung</p>

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP: Sets the mission and establishes strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving organization; empowers, motivates, and fosters a pipeline of talent for the future.

GOV 200 Building Power When You Feel Powerless: Radical Leadership for Uncertain Times

Haymarket In a time of political polarization, educator burnout, and attacks on unions, many leaders, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, are asking: How do I lead when I feel powerless? This interactive, skills-based workshop provides tools to help union leaders reclaim their agency, mobilize members, and influence systems even in restrictive environments. Participants will learn how to assess their current power, strategically build it, and lead from a place of radical authenticity.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Leslie Houston

GOV201 Emerging Voices to Empowered Leaders

Columbian *Emerging Voices* is a program designed to engage current members of the Green Bay Education Association (GBEA) and propel them into active leadership roles. This program is an integral part of GBEA and continues to inspire attendees to be active and involved members of the union.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Audrey Vandeyacht, Abie Vang

GOV202 Boosting Retention and Well-being through LaborManagement Collaboration

Water Tower *Strong collaboration between labor and management is a meaningful factor in enhancing educators' job satisfaction and retention. Learn how White Bear Lake Area Educators used an educator-generated tool to understand staff experience and measure progress. Focusing on responsive leadership, union participation, and proper resource allocation created conditions needed for success and led to significant improvements over time. Walk away with strategies to elevate well-being through collaboration.*

Designed for Level 1 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Tiffany Dittrich, Hallie Fox, Katie LaPointe

GOV203 Gold Star Failing: How to Use Failure as a Catalyst for Growth

Soldier Field What if your biggest flop could become your brightest breakthrough? In this interactive session, participants will flip the script on failure—reframing setbacks as springboards for creativity, resilience, and bold leadership. Walk away with practical tools, a fresh perspective, and your own “gold star” to turn mistakes into momentum.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Tamika Kelly

GOV204 Together: Collaborative Practices that Grow Power

Gold Coast Ever felt like there is just too much to do and not enough time? Most leaders find themselves in this situation and then face the terrible choices about what to drop and what to do. We can set ourselves up to lead by sharing the load. But this takes practice and strategy. Join us to discuss how we organize our leadership teams, onboard officers and set goals and give our members the best leadership team possible. And prevent burnout and resentment – the top killers of momentum.

Designed for Level 1 and Level 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Kate Dias, Gail Jordan

GOV205 Planting Seeds of Power: How We Grew a Collective of Union Leaders for Justice

Comiskey Union leadership today requires more than representation – it demands vision, courage, and the ability to cultivate a pro-union environment that builds collective power. This session focuses on how to grow and strengthen union stewards and non-leadership members alike by intentionally building leadership capacity across all levels of membership. Participants will learn how to support the transformation of members into active contributors to a shared agenda rooted in racial and social justice.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders
Learning Lead(s): Tamara Valdes-Russell



Block 2 (continued)

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP: Sets the mission and establishes strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving organization; empowers, motivates, and fosters a pipeline of talent for the future.

GOV206 Working Together on What Matters: Union-District Collaboration for Student Success

Wrigley How do we make sure that our association has a voice in decision-making all the time, not just during bargaining season? This session will help you position your local to increase educator voice within their school and district on the issues that matter to them. This session offers a helpful framework for boosting affiliate capacity, so that you approach union-district collaboration from a position of strength, and a shared decision-making process currently used by union-district teams across the nation.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Lead(s): Leigh Kennedy, Sarah Ammar

LEADING OUR PROFESSIONS: Advocates for quality inside our professions and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP200 The Discipline Crisis: Why Student Behavior is Devastating America's Schools and How to Change It

Roosevelt 3A Student behavior, not educator pay, is becoming the number one concern of educators and is a top reason teacher are leaving the classroom. This session will examine how societal, political, and educational policies and trends have combined to create the crisis facing public education—and what leaders can do to make the changes necessary to ensure educators' safety and provide a quality learning environment for students.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Andy Slaughter

LOP201 Andragogy in Action: Building Equity and Partnerships That Last (Part 2)

Michigan 1A This session, co-designed by a non-profit organization and an educators' union, centers on andragogy—how adults learn through relevance, autonomy, and collaboration. Participants will explore equity-driven strategies that transform classrooms and communities, comb and unpack standards, and connect initiatives to school budgets, family engagement, and community partnerships. Gain access to replicable tools to address systemic inequities and foster sustainable, student-centered success nationwide. *This is part 2 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tamar LaSure-Owens

LOP202 Cultivating a Culture of Learning: How Aspiring Educators Have Fostered Professionalism

Randolph 3 This session explores how Aspiring Educators can foster professionalism and cultivate a culture of lifelong learning. Through five key areas, participants will engage in presentations, table discussions, and goal setting to build strategies that support their professional growth, leadership, and success. Participants will leave with actionable plans, shared models, and practical advice to strengthen their role as future educators and leaders.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Jaylee Collier, Audrey Gilbert, Kiah Randall, Carson, Salyers, Nadia Pratt, Landen Morris

LOP203 Empowering Engagement: Effective Strategies in Recruiting and Supporting ESPs

Roosevelt 1A This interactive session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively recruit and support Education Support Professionals (ESPs), particularly in areas where no memorandum of understanding (MOU) exists. Through collaboration and hands-on activities, participants will explore the unique needs of ESPs and develop actionable strategies to enhance recruitment and support.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Wendy Rankin, Danette Stokes

LEADING OUR PROFESSIONS: Advocates for quality inside our professions and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP204 Disability Justice is Union Power

Michigan 3 Disability justice is key to saving public education and our democracy. This energizing session shows how ableism weakens our unions and schools—and how centering access and disabled leadership builds real resilience, respect, and power. Through reflection and action planning, leaders will gain tools to organize, advocate, and create truly inclusive locals that lift every member and every student.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Brandon Gernux

LOP205 Critical Ethnic Studies as Teacher Leadership, Resistance and Noncompliance in the Classroom (Part 2)

Randolph 1A How do educators combat coordinated attacks on teaching truth and develop strategies for resistance and noncompliance in their classrooms? Participants will hear how critical ethnic studies provides educators in St. Paul, MN, an opportunity to examine, dream, plan and execute teaching truth to students. Participants will also outline their own strategy for resistance, non-compliance, and teaching truth in their classrooms. *This is part 2 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Lead(s): Kimberly Colbert, Cassandra Sheppard

LOP206 Using the Model Code of Educators in Everyday ESP Work (Part 2)

Michigan 2 Education Support Professionals (ESP) are the heartbeat of every school system. Whether keeping students safe, supporting instruction, or maintaining essential operations, ESPs shape the conditions that make learning possible. Yet ESPs are often asked to navigate complex situations without formal guidance on ethical decision-making, boundaries, or professional expectations.

This session provides ESPs with a practical, easy-to-use framework for ethical professionalism—one that protects students, strengthens workplace relationships, and elevates the status of ESPs as essential educators. Participants will leave feeling empowered, confident, and better equipped to handle the challenges they face every day. *This is part 2 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Loranzo Andrews, Audrey Nichols

LOP207 Promoting Healthy Communities with Restorative Practices

Randolph 2 In this session, participants will learn and engage with practical strategies for organizing and building healthy relationships with students, families, and colleagues.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tyree Rivers, Chaka Diop

LOP208 Reclaiming Professionalism: Organizing for Educator-Powered Evaluation Systems

Michigan 1C Educators can—and must—organize to own and lead their professional growth. This session explores how reclaiming evaluation as an organizing issue builds collective voice, advances equity, and strengthens public trust. Through storytelling, strategy, and action planning, educators will gain tools to lead transformative professional development rooted in their expertise, unity, and vision for thriving schools.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Anzer 'Nikki' Woodward, Danillya Wilson



Block 2 (continued)

LEADING OUR PROFESSIONS: Advocates for quality inside our professions and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP209 The Power Within: Advancing Equity through Resilience, Respect, and Advocacy

Michigan 1B This session supports educators in developing key leadership and advocacy skills, professional resilience, and culturally responsive teaching. Participants will examine what it means to use their influence ethically and respectfully to advocate for inclusive learning environments that reflect the needs of all students. Through reflective dialogue and collaborative planning, educators will identify how to sustain their resilience in the face of systemic challenges.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Cherie Feemster

LOP210 What's Your Superpower: Bridging the Gap Between Teachers and Paraeducators

Randolph 1B Inclusive classrooms, which rely on strong collaboration among teachers and paraeducators, are essential but often challenged by unclear roles and communication gaps. This interactive session helps participants build respectful, effective partnerships by recognizing the unique "superpowers" each role brings. Through real-world scenarios and practical tools, attendees will learn strategies to improve communication, clarify expectations, and create a culture of shared responsibility ideal for teachers and paraeducators.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Vickie Gregory, Turkessa Winston

ORGANIZING: Mobilizes to influence successful organizing outcomes, strengthen internal and external relationships, and membership capacity; recruit and identify new members and potential leaders in the Association.

ORG200 Building Representative Power, Building Association Power

Crystal Ballroom A Locals win an action plan to strengthen resiliency, sustainability, and long-term organizing power in their locals.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Samuel Reddick

ORG201 Harnessing Collective Power: Understanding Power and Navigating Retaliation

Crystal Ballroom B This session shifts the lens from a business model to an organizing model at the building-representative level, demonstrating how this approach will increase engagement and build capacity beyond the building. It also guides building representatives in having effective discourse with administrators. This session provides an organizing overview that centers educators as natural organizers. This framework is used to show how building representative growth and engagement supports association growth and builds power and capacity by increasing member agency.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Sara Butryn

ORG202 Don't Dismiss Me: Seats at the Tables, Strategies to Recruit, Engage and Empower BIPOC Members (Part 2)

Crystal Ballroom C This hybrid session highlights best practices and intentional strategies for recruiting and engaging members of color in our unions as a pathway to building organizational power. Two states—New Jersey and Indiana—have used innovative approaches. Through intentional one-to-one conversations, creating affinity spaces, and culturally responsive organizing, participants will learn skills to create strategies that build trust and empower educators of color as leaders in their unions. **This is part 2 of a 2-part session.**

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): LaQuita Maxey, Eric Jones, Wafa Safi Hassan

ORGANIZING: Mobilizes to influence successful organizing outcomes, strengthen internal and external relationships, and membership capacity; recruit and identify new members and potential leaders in the Association.

ORG203 Recruiting and Identifying New Members and Leaders: CTE and Second-Career Teachers

Roosevelt 3B This interactive workshop explores how to build and protect collective power when facing retaliation. Through real-world case studies and organizing strategies, participants will learn to recognize power dynamics, respond to push back, and create networks of solidarity. Grounded in the organizing domain, this session supports members in mobilizing for justice, protecting one another, and sustaining momentum for transformational change.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Angela Harris

ORG204 Organizing Your Union Gym to Create Member Resilience, Respect, and Power!

Grand Hall H Many unions want to move from a service model to an organizing model. But what does it mean to be an organizing local? Learn how to shift your union's culture so members see their local as a gym membership—strengthening their educational advocacy—not a vending machine that provides services simply because they dues were paid. Participants will explore various concepts of organizing to frame local work and then practice methods of communication to create a member-centered organizing culture.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Tony Martinet

ORG205 Stronger Together: Membership Growth, Leadership Development, and Engagement Strategies

Picasso This session equips leaders with tools to recruit, engage, and empower members. Participants will explore communication strategies, practice one-on-one conversations, and use mapping to identify opportunities. Through the snowflake model, they will learn to share leadership, reduce barriers, and build equity. Participants will leave with an action plan and digital tools to strengthen engagement and union power.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Stacey Sweeny

ORG206 Member Organizing

Ogden Using our 100-plus page book filled with creative, successful actions locals have taken to win, this session will help participants scaffold their own actions through a customizable menu. Because one size doesn't fit all, participants can select direct actions from our Happy Hour, Starters, Light and Heavy Fare menus to build an action plan that meets members where they are. By participants scaffolding their actions to fit their unique challenges, locals will be able to build power immediately upon returning to work!

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Molly Smith, Karmen Lee Ortloff





Block 2 (continued)

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: Understands the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that create healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals; demonstrates ability to feel and show empathy, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions.

SEI200 Can We Talk? Moving Beyond the Call-Out

McCormick Educators are on the front lines of dialogue—whether in classrooms, staff meetings, or community spaces. This session offers practical tools to move beyond reactive “calling out” toward intentional “calling in” and empowering “calling on.” Participants will learn how to shift from confrontation to connection by building trust, addressing bias, and fostering equity. Walk away with strategies to support brave spaces for listening, learning, and leading real change in our school communities.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Taraja Shephard Allen, Janaya Foster, Hilario Benzon

SEI201 From “Difficult People” to Resilience and Respect: Transforming our Relationships!

Field Challenging times and difficult people...the mountain we confront today. Join us to explore how we can create safe, diverse, inclusive spaces by starting with social emotional intelligence. We'll begin by exploring our own triggers and trials, then discover how to transform relationships with others. Participants will develop action plans to create a culture of collaboration and caring in our worksites and communities while also learning to work with the most difficult person of all!

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Blake West

SEI202 Mastering Your Story: Leading Crucial Conversations with Intent and Impact (State Presidents Only, Part 2)

Regency Ballroom D The stories we tell ourselves about difficult situations and challenging people often become the invisible barriers that prevent breakthrough conversations and meaningful resolution. This workshop helps leaders craft new narratives that open possibilities, align intent with words, and speak truth with compassion while creating psychological safety for transformative dialogue. *This is part 2 of a 2-part session.*

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Andrea Walker

SEI203 Resilient Leadership: Using Mindfulness to Amplify Voice and Drive Change

Addams This experiential session equips leaders with mindfulness tools to strengthen self-awareness, resilience, and communication. Participants will identify and shift barriers that limit their leadership voice, practice strategies for composure in high-stakes moments, and create an action plan to mobilize others and drive change in their locals, states, and communities.

Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Comeshia Williams, Courtney Jolly, Comelia Franceschi

STRATEGY AND FISCAL HEALTH: Builds the brand and accomplishes the goals of the Association through effective financial management and understanding of fiduciary responsibilities.

SFH200 Demystifying Financial Statements So You Can Ask Questions Confidently in Meetings

Wright You do not need to be an accountant or financial wizard to know how to read financial statements. This session is intended to demystify association financial statements, understand basic nonprofit accounting terminology, and learn how to confidently ask questions in meetings about your association's financial statements or budget.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Rodney Rowe, Paula Purdy

SFH201 Regulatory and Other Compliance Matters for Local Leaders	
<i>Burnham</i>	NEA can only be as strong as its weakest state affiliate. A state affiliate can only be as strong as its weakest local. In this hostile political environment, it is important that local leaders know and understand the required regulatory filings (IRS and DOL requirements) as well as important recordkeeping information. The session will focus on how to complete a tax return for a typical local association, loss of tax-exempt status, DOL filings (forms LM-3 and LM-4), and document retention policies. <i>Designed for Level 1 Leaders</i> <i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Robert Maleta
SFH202 Leveraging NEA Member Benefits to Help Support a More Resilient Association	
<i>Stetson FG</i>	Fiscal health within the association at any level begins with fiscal health at home. To competently and confidently manage the day-to-day financial health of their local, leader-organizers must be clear-minded and not be distracted by external fiscal challenges. Educational empowerment around financial security at home allows for more laser focus around association financial issues and strategies. Leaders who are knowledgeable of NEAMB programs help foster member engagement at the local level. <i>Designed for Level 1 Leaders</i> <i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Michael Reilly, Jason Long
SFH203 Ensuring a Strong Financial Future through Pension Advocacy	
<i>Stetson E</i>	Work with other pension leaders to develop your voice as you learn from, and prepare to share, the National Institute on Retirement Security's research called "Pensionomics." Find out how this applies in your state, learn where to find the information, and develop a plan for sharing this data with legislators, elected officials, and NEA members to secure a pension benefit for all education staff. <i>Designed for Level 2 Leaders</i> <i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Susan Lemmo, Sandra Ryan

BOARD ONLY SESSION (NOTE: For NEA Board of Directors Only)	
BOD200 From Local Voices to Capitol Choices: Effective Lobbying in DC and at Home	
<i>Plaza Ballroom B</i>	Learn how to turn your local advocacy into national impact! This interactive workshop explores the full cycle of effective lobbying—how to bring your community's priorities to the nation's capital and how to bring federal and state policy updates back to your states and local EAs. Participants will gain practical strategies for building relationships with legislators, crafting powerful messages, and coordinating advocacy efforts between local and national levels. Whether you're new to the Board of Directors or looking to sharpen your skills, you'll leave empowered to make your voice—and your members' voices—count where it matters most. <i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Laurie Gibson-Parker, Mallorie Evans, Christina Melly, Lauren Greenfield, Daneen Watson, Stephanie Johnson, Linda McCrary, Susan Nicholas



Reflection Sheet – 3

Sunday, March 15, 2026

Session Title _____

Write one leadership goal you will set for yourself over the next twelve months?

1. _____

From this session, I have learned...

How does this session connect to my work?

Amplify Your Voice – Share your experience using our social media platforms.



Session Descriptions | Block 3 | Sunday, March 15, 8:15–10:15 a.m. CT

<p>ADVOCACY: Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members' professional needs and rights.</p>	
ADV300	Equity and Justice in the Workplace through Inclusive Listening and Community Building
<i>New Orleans</i>	<p>This session is for union leaders who want to deepen their advocacy for workplace equity and justice. The session will explore how to build and maintain an inclusive and listening-centric community within their union. Leaders will examine their current interactions with their team and constituents to identify areas where they can better support them to surface and strategize on workplace issues.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Christina Gallup</p>
ADV301	Leading with Empathy: A Union-Centered Approach to Supporting Multilingual Learners and Educators
<i>Stetson BC</i>	<p>The number of multilingual learners (MLs) in U.S. public schools is increasing. Without proper support, linguistic diversity can be challenging for many educators. This session will equip NEA leaders to advocate for and create change that benefits both MLs and the educators who serve them. Through hands-on activities, participants will focus on identifying barriers, advocating for resources, and building a culture of respect and empathy.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Kirsten Salonga</p>
ADV302	Resilience, Resistance, and Realness in the Classroom: Repairing and Fortifying Relationships
<i>San Francisco</i>	<p>Grasp the essence of resilience, resistance, and realness, whether in your own life or while wrangling a classroom full of eager minds. Realize that no caped leader is swooping in to rescue us! Only when we band together with the power of the mighty 3-Rs can we spark the change our mission craves. Explore trauma-based methods to forge genuine connections and commit to personal transformation in the name of progress.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Lucket Kiche</p>
ADV303	Restricting Student Cell Phones: Policy Options and Advocacy Strategies for Strong District Policy
<i>Regency Ballroom A</i>	<p>As state laws restricting student personal devices in schools sweep the nation, state and local associations can take the lead to ensure effective school district policy that enhances student learning conditions and minimizes bullying, distractions, and other device-related harms. Drawing on affiliate experience and a new NEA action guide, participants will explore policy options, identify needs and opportunities at the state and/or local levels, and leave with a plan of action.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> MaryBeth Szydowski, Mega Tuttle, Kim Blair</p>
ADV304	Read All About It! Embracing Lessons of Racial and Social Justice from Every Voice
<i>Stetson D</i>	<p>Read all about it! This engaging book talk explores powerful works centered on racial and social justice, offering insights to inspire reflection, dialogue, and action. Participants will discover diverse voices and stories that highlight equity, inclusion, and leadership, while gaining practical ideas to bring back to their schools and communities. Together, we'll embrace lessons that support building leaders who advocate for positive change.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Savannah Galaviz</p>



Block 3 (continued)

ADV305 The I in Team: Personal Accountability as the Foundation for Collective Advocacy	
<i>Stetson E</i>	<p>We have all heard: "There's no 'I' in team." However, in advocacy, the "I" matters, because there is an "I" in win. This session reframes personal accountability as the foundation of advocacy success. Using partnerships and union organizing principles, participants will explore how individual ownership fuels collective power, builds trust, strengthens partnerships, and sustains movements that defend democracy and public education.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Terry Ross</p>
ADV306 The Inclusion Mission Room: Breaking Barriers to Lead for Equity	
<i>Regency Ballroom B</i>	<p>Are you ready to escape? Step into The Inclusion Mission Room, an immersive leadership experience where participants tackle real-world challenges to break down systemic barriers to inclusion for students with disabilities. Through collaborative problem-solving, advocacy simulations, and equity-driven design, leaders will leave empowered with innovative strategies, action plans, and the courage to lead intentionally for all students.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> DeNaé Bush</p>
ADV307 Leveraging Federal Austerity vs. Corporate Welfare: Tax Abatements and Public Services in the DOGE Era	
<i>Regency Ballroom C</i>	<p>U.S. school districts and communities lose tens of billions of dollars in tax revenue annually to corporate tax breaks. But with federal austerity, it's no longer affordable. Join Good Jobs First, a national policy resource center that promotes corporate and government accountability in economic development, and NEA Collective Bargaining and Member Advocacy (CBMA) to learn more about these shady deals, the tools that exist to expose them, and how your state and local union can fight back.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Greg LeRoy</p>
COMMUNICATION: Builds an integrated communications strategy that drives the goals of our professions.	
COM300 Words Matter, Collectively They Can Heal or Harm	
<i>Grand Hall J</i>	<p>Language not only reflects but shapes our world. The words we choose influence perception, power dynamics, inclusion, and self-identity. Being aware of these effects, it is essential, especially in education and social contexts, to use language intentionally and foster equitable, inclusive, and thoughtful communities.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Eboni Rucker</p>
COM301 The Power of Storytelling: A Tool for Advocacy	
<i>Grand Hall K</i>	<p>This interactive workshop is focused on engaging participants to reflect and identify their personal and professional stories that can be used to leverage change in teacher unions and public education. Specifically, participants will leave with a well-crafted personal or professional narrative and how to communicate that in a way that will help move people from awareness to advocacy, both at the local and global level.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Kiran Masud, Jacquelyn Moorman</p>

COM302 Let's Communicate! Easy Strategies to Increase Association Communication	
<i>Grand Hall I</i>	<p>Effective communication within a local association is vital to engaging members. This session is designed for local leaders who do not have current communication plan or who need to refresh their existing strategies. This session will cover the importance of understanding purpose and audience, how to write a mission statement, and how to build a brand. Participants will also learn communication tactics such as creating a newsletter, posting on social media, and using additional tools to reach members.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Chelsea Miles</p>
COM303 Writing an Association Narrative: Telling Your Local's Story of Resilience, Resistance, and Power	
<i>Grand Hall L</i>	<p>Many locals have vision and mission statements. However, helping rank-and-file members and local community members understand your local union's values and advocacy goals takes more effort. Writing an association narrative makes your union's values, goals, and principles a visible, tangible commitment. Participants will learn how two different locals completed a process for writing an association narrative, and how that work became a key part of broader communication and organizing strategies.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Tony Martinet</p>
COM304 Sharing Your Story: A Powerful Tool to Sign Up New Employees	
<i>Grand Hall MN</i>	<p>This session will explore and teach the power of using your personal story as a cornerstone of a high-quality New Employee Orientation (NEO) and as a tool for recruiting new employees. By teaching the key tenants of public narrative, participants will be able to utilize their lived experiences and values-based messaging when asking new employees to join the union. By shifting to personal stories and values-based messaging, we can change NEO culture and sign up more members, strengthening our union.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Laura Latham</p>

GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP: Sets the mission and establishes strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving organization; empowers, motivates, and fosters a pipeline of talent for the future.

GOV300 Association History: Exploring Key Inflection Points for Building Identity, Unity, and Power	
<i>Soldier Field</i>	<p>As leaders who seek to govern well and build the union, it is as important to know where we've been as it is to know where we want to go. Union leaders must learn from NEA's long, remarkable history, both to celebrate successes and learn and grow from challenges. From NEA's early origins as a professional association to its growth and identity as the largest labor organization in the United States, this session unpacks key inflection points along NEA's timeline and considers how the union's leadership and actions in the current moment shape NEA's future.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Corey Gochenaur, Paul Birkmeier, Cassie McCabe</p>
GOV301 Beyond Us vs. Them: Reimagining Union–District Collaboration through Collective Bargaining	
<i>Wrigley</i>	<p>This session engages participants in applying the NEA Leadership Competency Framework to union-district collaboration. Through experiential activities, case studies, and dialogue, attendees explore data-driven advocacy, tiered communication, governance, and professional leadership. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to strengthen collective bargaining, advance equity, and implement solutions tailored to their local context, regardless of role or affiliate size.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Emily Miller, Steven Byers</p>



Block 3 (continued)

GOV302 Building Your Bench: Engaging Membership as Future Leaders	
<i>Plaza Ballroom A</i>	<p>Our union is responsible for growing and nurturing potential future leaders. Strong leaders within our organization carry over their work into our public schools and the communities they support. In this session, leaders from the Green Bay Education Association will provide hands-on tasks to strengthen and engage your local membership and set your organization up for successful future leaders.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Brent Bergstrom, Emilie Heil</p>
GOV303 Amplifying the Voices of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ Members	
<i>Randolph 2</i>	<p>This session focuses on identifying barriers to inclusion and representation within the union at all levels, analyzing current association systems and structures with the goal of reducing or eliminating barriers to active union participation by members of historically marginalized populations. The session will show how reducing these barriers benefits ALL union members. Practical next steps for local and state leaders will be provided.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Stacy Schmidt, Shauna Cihacek, Zipporah Smith</p>
GOV304 Leading with Integrity: Building Union Power through Voice, Vision, and Connection	
<i>Haymarket</i>	<p>Discover how one local president built a strong, inclusive union by empowering leaders, fostering transparency, and advocating with purpose. Learn practical strategies to develop trust, grow member engagement, and ensure educators have a seat at the table. This will be an interactive session with discussion about current topics and ways that local leaders, along with the executive boards, can support educators for successful interactions with their district administration.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Paula Johnson</p>
GOV305 Solutions that Unite: Using IBB Methods for Member Success, Union Strength, and Lasting Partnerships	
<i>Roosevelt 1B</i>	<p>Learn how collaborative problem-solving, using interest-based bargaining methods, can help locals, with or without bargained contracts, resolve issues with administration. Participants will learn strategies, explore examples, practice scenarios, and gain tools to find resolution, preserve relationships, and build partnerships. This session will equip leaders to strengthen unions, improve working conditions, and advance members' success.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Moira McCracken, Gillian Slaughter</p>
GOV306 From Vision to Action: Strategic Planning with the NEA Leadership Competency Framework	
<i>Michigan 1C</i>	<p>This interactive session helps educators and leaders turn vision into action using the NEA Leadership Competency Framework. Through case studies and planning tools, participants will practice building equity-driven strategies that address challenges. Attendees will leave with a draft action plan and a clear next step for their leadership journey.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Stephanie Suerth</p>
GOV307 Developing Leaders, Not Titles: A Multifaceted Approach to Leadership Development	
<i>Picasso</i>	<p>In this session, participants will learn how one small state is taking slow and intentional steps to shape a dynamic and impactful leadership development experience aligned with the NEA Leadership Competency Framework. This approach supports the growth of leaders while fostering a culture of "stepping up" in the way that feels most comfortable for the individual. This perfectly imperfect journey is one that applies to all types of union folk from rank-and-file members to local/state leaders to affiliate staff. Participants will walk away with plans to jumpstart or restart their own leadership journeys.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Kathy Dulis</p>

LEADING OUR PROFESSIONS: Advocates for quality inside our professions and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation and student learning.

LOP300 Empowering Our Own: A Framework for Providing ESP Mentoring, Leadership and Professional Learning

Roosevelt 3A Empowering Our Own is an initiative of the Illinois Education Association designed to provide statewide education support professional (ESP) mentoring, leadership, and professional growth program that can be implemented at the school district and/or local level. This comprehensive, career-long program uses the ESP Professional Growth Continuum as a tool and is specifically tailored to meet the evolving needs of ESPs across all career stages.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Crystal Bush, Amy Evans

LOP301 Growing Our Own: Inspiring Future Educators through CTE Pathways

Randolph 3 This interactive session equips NEA leaders to recruit, mentor, and support future educators through career and technical education (CTE) programs and Future Educator clubs. Participants develop actionable 90-day future educator action plans, build local pipelines, engage community allies, and promote equity, diversity, and professional pride to strengthen the profession and their local affiliate. Join us to make a lasting impact on the next generation of educators!

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Erin Mareth

LOP302 Health and Safety: A Bridge Between Professional Growth and Field Organizing Work

Randolph 1A The Arizona Education Association and NEA have teamed up to offer health and safety trainings and leadership development opportunities to rank-and-file members statewide to further their leadership skills, organizing work at the local level, and member-led professional growth. We'll share the story of collaboration and theory of change, discuss the shift in using professional growth for organizing, and support the creation of a SMARTIE/AIM statement to create change.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Eunice Hernandez Salcedo, Lupita Almanza, David Lillie

LOP303 Leading from Within: Empowering Introverted Leaders

Michigan 3 Leadership isn't about being the loudest—it's about being authentic. This session encourages introverts to embrace their strengths, build confidence, and lead in their own way. Through interactive discussion, real-world examples, and practical strategies, participants will explore how introversion can be a powerful asset, and not a limitation. This session will help you build confidence, communicate with impact, and lead authentically from within.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Marsha Pinto

LOP304 Leading Our Professions: Advocates for Professional Learning, Quality, and Social Diversity

Roosevelt 1A This 90-minute interactive session is designed to empower educators to be leaders and advocates within their professions. The session emphasizes the importance of professional learning, maintaining high professional standards, and promoting social diversity within educational spaces as pathways to increasing their skill level in the Leading Our Professions competency domain. This session will also highlight the critical role that unions play in advancing educational transformation, student learning, and equitable access to opportunities.

Designed for Level 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Veronica Hall, Amanda Thompson



Block 3 (continued)

LOP305		Less Stress, More Impact: AI as Your Self-Care Partner
Michigan 1B	<p>Teaching and leading take energy! AI can help you get some back. Explore tools to save time, cut stress, and create space for what matters most. Walk away with ready-to-use AI strategies that lighten your workload and give you more energy for students, advocacy, and yourself.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Lindsey Weatherby, Melissa Constantino-Poruben</p>	
LOP306		Safe Schools, Safe Educators: Advancing Professional Standards for Safer Schools
Randolph 1B	<p>Safe schools are essential to professional excellence and student learning. This workshop explores how unions can lead the profession by advocating for policies and strategies that address both educator safety and student success. From mitigating student-on-staff violence to improving environmental conditions such as air and water quality, participants will learn how these issues are central to professional standards.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Larry Ballard</p>	
LOP307		School Counselors as Changemakers: Union Advocacy to Redefine Roles, Ratios and Responsibilities
Michigan 1A	<p>School counselors are vital to student success. Counselors often face high caseloads, and they are misused in the school environment. This interactive session equips NEA leaders with tools to advocate for equitable ratios, role clarity, and stronger counselor-administrator-union partnerships through real-world examples, discussions, and action planning. Participants will leave with a customized plan to support comprehensive school counseling programs.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Darell Crawford-Parker</p>	
LOP308		Sustainability in Education: Cultivating a Workforce that Transforms and Transcends
Michigan 2	<p>What does it take to build an educational workforce that doesn't just survive but thrives? This session reimagines sustainability through purpose-driven leadership, bold dialogue, and regenerative practices that fuel both people and systems. Whether emerging or experienced, participants will leave inspired, empowered, and ready to shape a future that is just, joyful, and enduring, rooted in care, community, and the collective power of educators.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Krishawna Goins</p>	
<p>ORGANIZING: Mobilizes to influence successful organizing outcomes, strengthen internal and external relationships, and membership capacity; recruit and identify new members and potential leaders in the Association.</p>		
ORG300		Don't Dismiss Me: Seats at the Tables, Strategies to Recruit, Engage and Empower BIPOC Members (Part 2)
Grand Hall G	<p>This interactive session will equip leaders with the tools to transform conversations into commitments by building authentic relationships and using a proven ISAHUEY organizing framework: Introduction, Story, Agitate, Hope, Urgency, Educate, and You. Grounded in communication, connection, and campaigns, participants will practice strategies that foster trust, strengthen relationships, and inspire action. Attendees will leave ready to return to their affiliates with actionable skills to organize with courage and purpose. <i>This is part 2 of a 2-part session.</i></p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Larry Carey</p>	

ORG301	Onboarding Your Local Board to Organizing
<i>Crystal Ballroom A</i>	<p>This session explores how local union leaders can onboard their boards of directors and officers to embrace organizing. Using tools such as one-on-one conversations, power mapping, and 10-minute meetings, participants will engage in activities that mirror successful practices from Maryland's Frederick County Teachers Association. Together, participants will increase their resilience, deepen respect, and build power to save public education and our democracy.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Karl Kidd</p>
ORG302	Organize to Energize: How a Strategic Plan Sparked Student and Family Engagement
<i>Crystal Ballroom B</i>	<p>Learn how a strategic organizing plan boosted student and family engagement through the AHUY framework—Agitate, Hope, Urgency, Yes. This session will highlight how intentional outreach, clear turnout plans, and aligned messaging led to tangible results. Walk away with actionable steps and tools to build community power, deepen engagement, and create lasting change. When we organize with purpose, we inspire people to show up and act.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> LaShana Richards, Kenya Donaldson</p>
ORG303	Partnering for a Powerful Future: How Union Leaders Can Champion Aspiring Educators
<i>Grand Hall H</i>	<p>This session is designed to equip union leaders with the knowledge and skills to effectively partner with and support the next generation of educators. Participants will explore the structure of the NEA Aspiring Educators Program and learn practical strategies for building relationships with college students, strengthening local chapter and affiliate collaboration, and providing meaningful support to future educators on their journey to the classroom and into the union.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Matthew Yuro</p>
ORG304	Precision Organizing: Moving Beyond Assumptions for Real Growth
<i>Toronto</i>	<p>Do you have the tools to move beyond assumptions and drill down for real member growth? This session, shared through the eyes of NEA Aspiring Educator state organizers and a panel of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and minority-serving institutions campus advisors, will introduce the NEA Professional Learning Theory tool. Participants will learn how to use this tool to combat assumptions, organize a targeted group for membership and engagement growth, and apply the tool to their worksite to pinpoint areas for future organizing and growth.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 3 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Amber Brown, Donna Hamilton, StarrBe Bryant, Shafeeq Ameen, Meghan Depue, Marian Ramsey</p>
ORG305	Workers Over Billionaires: The Fight for Public Education
<i>Regency Ballroom D</i>	<p>This session makes the direct connection between billionaire wealth, privatization attacks on public education, and the May Day 2028 movement. Participants will analyze how billionaire-funded organizations and policies undermine educators and students and explore how collective action, including May Day participation, builds power to defend public education.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 3 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> June Prakash, Shannon Rasmussen, Alfonso Salais, Michael Evans, Brent Bergstrom, Janet Caldwell, Wil Page</p>



Block 3 (continued)

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: Understands the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that create healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals; demonstrates ability to feel and show empathy, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions.

SEI300 Mindful Solidarity: How Yoga Practice Strengthens Union Organizations

Horner When educators develop emotional self-awareness and cultivate empathy through practices like yoga, they become better equipped to build meaningful connections with students and colleagues. This enhanced emotional intelligence translates directly into more thoughtful decision-making and stronger classroom relationships. Educators who can recognize and regulate their own emotions are naturally better positioned to support and nurture their students' social and emotional growth.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Candice Ridley

SEI301 Imposing on Imposter Syndrome

Ogden This session is designed to be an engaging and transformative experience for NEA leaders. Through a blend of interactive discussions, practical exercises, and personalized planning, participants will gain concrete strategies to overcome self-doubt and cultivate a resilient leadership mindset. The session will emphasize experiential learning, allowing participants to actively apply concepts to their own leadership journeys and connect with peers for ongoing support.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Kate Cummings

SEI302 Real Self-Care as Systemic Change: Saving Public Education by Empowering Educators

Wright In this interactive session, participants will explore how real self-care—not surface-level rest or gimmicks, but deep practices of embodiment, reflection, and boundary-setting—can sustain educators and transform the entire public education system. Grounded in somatic wisdom, restorative practices, and collective resilience, participants will create an action plan that shifts their internal capacities, enabling richer leadership and more sustainable, equitable educational environments.

Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Sarah Bland

SEI303 Respect Is More Than Yes Ma'am and No Sir: Respecting the Diversity of All Members

Burnham Respect for diversity is a cornerstone of effective organizing. Ensuring the dignity of all people is essential for engagement and action. Understanding the nuances of demonstrating respect for all identities—such as racial/ethnic, religious/spiritual, gender identity/gender expression, sexual orientation, and other identities important to everyone—is essential. This session will explore the range of identities and how to ensure that everyone is valued and respected.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Toni Smith, Karen Solheim

SEI304 Rest as Resistance: Reclaiming Time, Boundaries, and Humanity in the Profession Tagline

Skyway 260 Tired of performative self-care? This session challenges burnout culture and reimagines leadership that honors humanity. Through audits, role-plays, and a leadership "hackathon," participants will explore boundaries, rest, and sustainability as tools for resistance. They will leave with a practical toolkit to build a culture of care in their union.

Designed for Level 1 Leaders

Learning Lead(s): Shauna Gorton, Hannah Rake

SEI305 Restoring Rhythm: Healing-Centered Leadership Flows	
<i>Field</i>	<p>This session guides participants through healing-centered leadership flows—turning within, tuning in, and turning to your neighbor—to restore rhythm in leadership and practice. Rooted in social and emotional intelligence, these flows nurture healthy identities, regulate emotions, and foster empathy, connection, and collective agency to sustain justice work and equity in schools for educator leaders and advocates.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 and 3 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Sofia Gonzalez</p>
SEI306 Sustaining the Advocate: Take Care of Yourself While Taking Care of Others	
<i>Addams</i>	<p>This interactive session explores how prioritizing advocate wellness strengthens both personal resilience and collective impact. Grounded in the CASEL framework of social emotional learning, participants will learn practical strategies for balance and renewal and self-care for sustainable advocacy. Using restorative practices, reflective dialogue, and wellness strategies, attendees will develop tools to care for themselves while continuing to care for their organizations and others.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Robin McNair</p>
SEI307 The EQ Advantage: How Social and Emotional Intelligence Fuels Transformative Leadership	
<i>Roosevelt 3B</i>	<p>Discover how social and emotional intelligence (SEI) transforms educational leadership. Grounded in the NEA Leadership Competency Framework, this workshop equips leaders with practical strategies to build trust, navigate conflict, and foster inclusive cultures amid today's challenges. Participants will leave ready to apply SEI to strengthen relationships, improve communication, and drive collective impact in schools and associations.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Sabreen Mutawally, Nichole Page-Summers</p>
STRATEGY AND FISCAL HEALTH: Builds the brand and accomplishes the goals of the Association through effective financial management and understanding of fiduciary responsibilities.	
SFH300 How to Do an Internal Audit of Your Association's Financial Records	
<i>Stetson FG</i>	<p>This session will provide basic information about what an audit is, why it is important to annually audit your association's financial records, and how to do an internal audit with two to -three people. During this session, participants will be doing a hands-on exercise in performing an internal audit to demonstrate how easy it is to do one.</p> <p><i>Design for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Rodney Rowe, Paula Purdy</p>
SFH301 Strategic Budgeting: Optimizing Resources for Organizational Success	
<i>McCormick</i>	<p>Considering the economic and political environment we are in, it is essential to use association resources responsibly through strategic thinking and effective fiscal management. This session will cover the definition of strategic budgeting, its connection to overall organizational goals, the budget cycle, and identifying budgeting challenges and solutions.</p> <p><i>Designed for Level 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Roberta Maleta</p>
SFH302 Creating a Culture of Listening: Using Applied Improvisation Principles for Deeper Engagement	
<i>DuSable</i>	<p>In a democratic organization, authentic stakeholder engagement is critical to developing an organizational strategy that is embraced by all. In this fun and interactive session, participants will learn how to thoughtfully apply the principles of improv to deepen stakeholder engagement throughout the strategic planning process and yield a strategic plan that more broadly reflects the needs of stakeholders. Come ready to laugh and learn together!</p> <p><i>Design for Level 1 and 2 Leaders</i></p> <p><i>Learning Lead(s):</i> Sarah Ammar</p>



Block 3 (continued)

BOARD ONLY SESSION (NOTE: For NEA Board of Directors Only)

BOD300 Smart, Strategic, and Surprisingly Sexy – Bringing Life to the Budget!

Plaza
Ballroom B

This dynamic session empowers NEA Board members to connect the Strategic Plan and Budget to NEA's mission, articulate fiscal priorities with clarity, and champion the "why" behind every dollar. Participants will explore how dues dollars drive programs, services, and member engagement and develop strategies to communicate budget priorities effectively.

Learning Lead(s): Jeff Hubbard, Lindsey Smith, Joshua Baxter, Tanya Coats, Barbara Rheault, Sherri Schwanz



Thank you for attending this year's event. Please continue to pause, reflect, and then post about your experience on our social media – Facebook – NEA Summit Leaders and Bluesky - #NEASummit #EdLeaders

Remember to check out the Leadership Development page www.nea.org/leadership-development, for resources to help you continue your leadership journey.



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A special thanks to all our presenters and the NEA staff in the following centers:

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A tremendous thanks to all the volunteers. Your tireless work made this summit possible!



Thank you for joining us!

See you March 12-14, 2027

Location coming soon!



See you in March for the 2027 NEA National Leadership

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