

# Campaign Lab FAQ

*(Updated July 2026)*

## Who is eligible to apply?

- The Campaign Lab is open to NEA local affiliates and state affiliates. NEA caucuses, councils, and other affiliated groups are not eligible to apply for Campaign Lab participation. Applications must be submitted by a local or state affiliate that will serve as the lead organization for the campaign.

## How do I apply to the Campaign Lab?

- Affiliates may apply to Campaign Lab at any time. Beginning in September 2026, all newly accepted campaigns will be assigned to a 12-month cohort. Check the Campaign Lab website for upcoming cohort deadlines.
- Any member may submit an application for the Campaign Lab; however, you must obtain written permission from your local and state president to participate. To apply, click the blue “Click Here to Apply to Campaign Lab” button found at <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/campaign-lab>.
- The person who submits the application will be considered the “team lead.” Team leads are responsible for communication with the NEA Campaign Lab and Campaign Lab Coaches.
- The Team Lead can change as long as NEA Campaign Lab is notified. It is the responsibility of the Team Lead to notify the Local and State Affiliates that you are planning to apply and make sure that one or the other are willing to serve as the fiscal agent should you receive any funding from the Campaign Lab. They will need to ensure that they have a W-9 on file with NEA at some point in the future should you receive any funding.
- Upon initial acceptance, the State Affiliate is notified of the application and provided 48 hours in which to respond to the application. If there is no issue with the state, the team lead will be notified of acceptance into the Campaign Lab.
- Campaign Lab teams are accepted on a 12-month cycle. To continue participation in the Lab, teams are encouraged to reapply by clicking on the blue “Click Here to Apply to Campaign Lab” button found at <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/campaign-lab>.
- For more information on the application process contact Amanda Kail, [akail@nea.org](mailto:akail@nea.org), or Melissa Dan, [mdan@nea.org](mailto:mdan@nea.org).

## What are the grant guidelines for the Campaign Lab?

- Review grant guidelines [here](#).

## How will teams be coached?

- Every approved local team will be supported by a peer coach. The coach and team lead will establish coaching cycles, typically every other week, to support their team.

- All team leads, coaches and mentor coaches are required to meet once a month for a networking, skill building, and collective problem-solving meeting. This is online and is led by NEA Campaign Lab Coordinators in partnership with coaches and leads.
- State affiliates should work with local affiliates to make sure there are good systems in place for two-way communication regarding what is happening in the Lab. NEA is neutral on the composition of teams. State and local affiliates should work together to determine who should be on each local team.
- There are three levels of leadership and coaching within the NEA Campaign Lab: Team Leads, Campaign Coaches, and Mentor Coaches.
  - Team Leads are local member leaders who submit Campaign Lab applications and work directly with the Campaign Lab Coach. They are focused on developing an Organizing Team and leading a local campaign. The Team Lead can change once a team is established and upon notification to the NEA Campaign Lab.
  - Campaign Coaches are rank-and-file members that have completed the NEA Campaign Academy Training and practicum. Members with previous campaign experience are strongly encouraged to apply. Campaign Coaches commit to coaching at least one team lead for at least one year and receive a stipend for their work.
  - Mentor Coaches are either NEA or State Affiliate Staff who have broader experience with leading teams and locals implementing issue campaigns. Mentor Coaches are committed to growing the capacity of Coaches to move their Team Leads through campaigns.

### Who are the coaches?

- **Campaign Lab coaches are NEA members who have direct and sustained experience with campaigns and organizing. All NEA member coaches will be trained in standard coaching practices. To become a campaign coach please complete the following application: [2026 NEA Campaign Coach Application – Fill out form](#)**
- Campaign Lab coaches will be assigned to teams in collaboration with NEA staff.
- Any member or state affiliate staff can apply to serve as a coach in the Campaign Lab by completing the following application: [Apply to be a Campaign Coach](#)

### The Commitment for Coaches

- Remotely coach 1-2 participating Campaign Lab teams; coaching 1 team is a ~ 5 hour per month commitment; coaching 2 teams is a ~ 9 hour per month commitment.
- Engage in the following activities: Coach local teams and team leads; plan, reflect on, and document coaching calls; participate in virtual trainings and workshops; participate in peer-to-peer problem solving calls with other coaches; engage in follow-up check-ins with local teams between coaching sessions.
- Assist with facilitating at least one All-Call meeting.
- Coaches will have a 12-month contract and are eligible to reapply for additional contract years.

- Campaign coaches can either submit a minimum number of hours of experience coaching campaigns or complete the Coaching Academy and practicum. To obtain the certificate, coaches are required to complete the Coaching Academy training.

### The Opportunity for Coaches

- A stipend of \$1,100 for coaching 1 local team or \$1,800 for coaching 2 local teams.
- Foundational training in methods and tools for coaching campaigns.
- Biweekly (twice per month) coaching from an experienced Mentor coach that will work with you to sharpen your coaching skills and navigate coaching challenges in ways that build the skills, motivation, and strategic capabilities of local team leads.
- The opportunity to participate in a historic national campaign committed to promoting, protecting, and strengthening public education.

### Successful coaches will have:

- Demonstrated experience in foundational organizing practices associated with building organizing teams and planning campaigns. Additional experience in strategic planning and coalition-building is a plus.
- A willingness to grow and develop your organizing and coaching practice through completion of the NEA Coaching Academy training and practicum.
- For more information about coaches, contact Melisa Dan, [mdan@nea.org](mailto:mdan@nea.org).

### **What are the trainings that are provided?**

- NEA Campaign Lab trainings are made available to all participants in the Campaign Lab, free of charge, via partnerships with the [Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools](#), the [Midwest Academy](#), and the UC Berkeley Labor Center [Skills to Win](#). These are synchronous, online opportunities (subject to availability).
- EA offers three, in person Campaign Academies. These two and a half day events are designed for affiliate staff and members that are currently in the NEA Campaign Lab. NEA covers the costs of travel for registered participants. For detailed information, registration, and schedules visit <https://www.nea.org/UD-Org-Support>
- NEA offers online courses that specifically support teams and coaches in the Campaign Lab. These are hosted at [The NEA Professional Excellence Portal](#) and anyone with an account (free to create) can participate. Once you have created an account, search the catalogue using the search terms, "Campaign Lab or Organizing." All courses provide a certificate of completion for contact hours. These online trainings are asynchronous and can be done anytime independently.
- For more information about the in-person or online trainings, contact Melissa Dan, [mdan@nea.org](mailto:mdan@nea.org) or Amanda Kail, [akail@nea.org](mailto:akail@nea.org).