

# 2026 Summer Institute

## Organizing Around Academic & Professional Issues

**Chandra McPeters**

**CTA Staff, Region 2**

**Equity and Justice Department (EJD)**

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## About me...

- **Teacher - 23 years**
  - 3rd and 4th
  - 2nd – 6th Reading Intervention
  - Reading and Language Arts Specialist
- **Union Leader**
  - STA - Vice-President; Treasurer; Exec Board; Site Rep
  - CTA - State Council Delegate; Delta Service Center Chair
  - NEA - RA Delegate
- **CTA Staff - 4 years**

# Academic & Professional Issues

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**Who's in the room? Please raise your hand if you are:**

- Chapter Officer – President, Vice-President, Treasurer, or Secretary
- Executive Board Member
- Site Rep
- Committee Member

# Academic & Professional Issues

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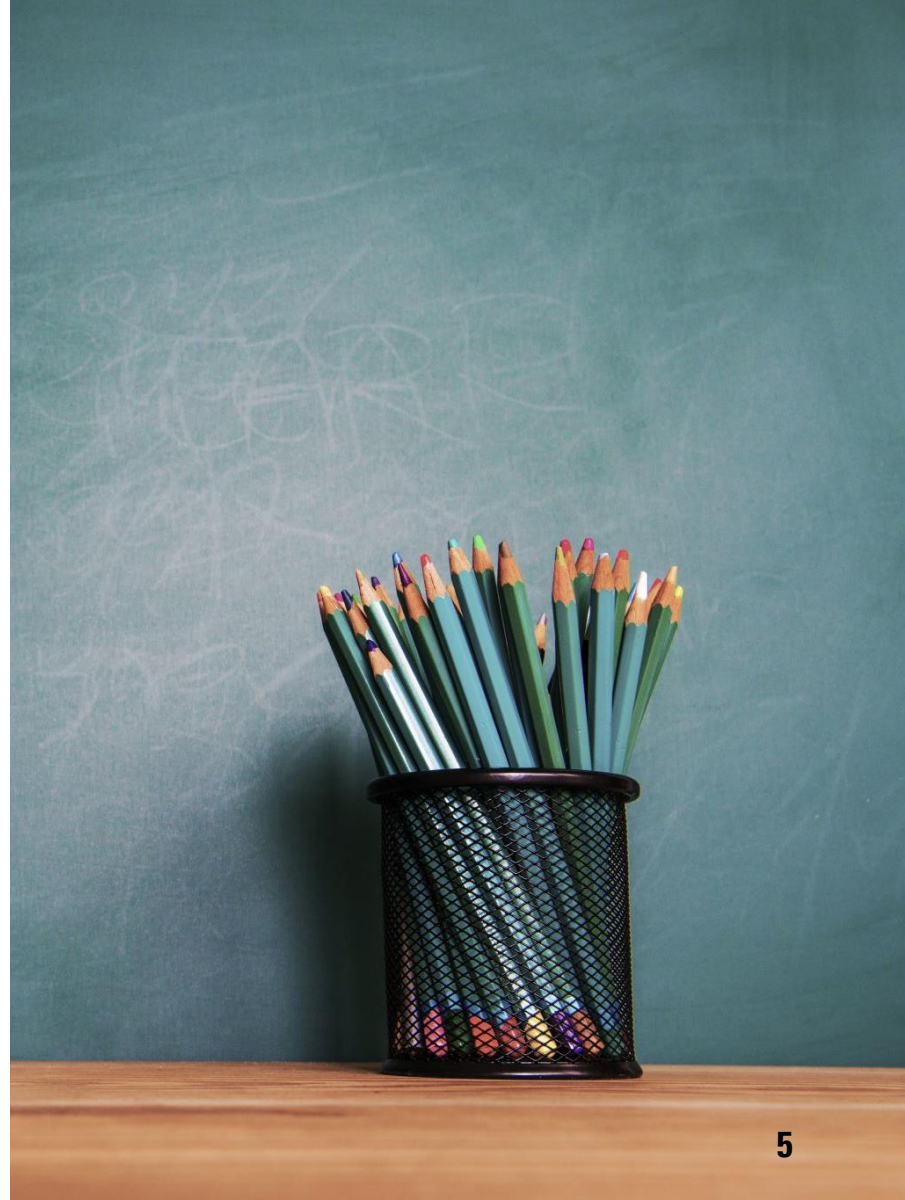
## Definition

Initiatives that impact teaching and learning  
and/or  
the quality of the profession

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# Lessons Learned

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# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Lesson Learned as a Union Leader

### 1. You Have To Organize Constantly.

- You can organize in response to events – **reactive**.
- You can organize when you don't "have to" to be ready when a need arises – **proactive**.
- **Constant organizing makes for a stronger, more agile chapter.**

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## Lesson Learned as a Union Leader

### 2. Organizing isn't just protests, rallies, and actions.

- The foundation of organizing – and chapter power – is making sure that every single member is plugged into the association in some way.
- **We have to provide different ways for members to engage with their local.**

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Lesson Learned as a Union Leader

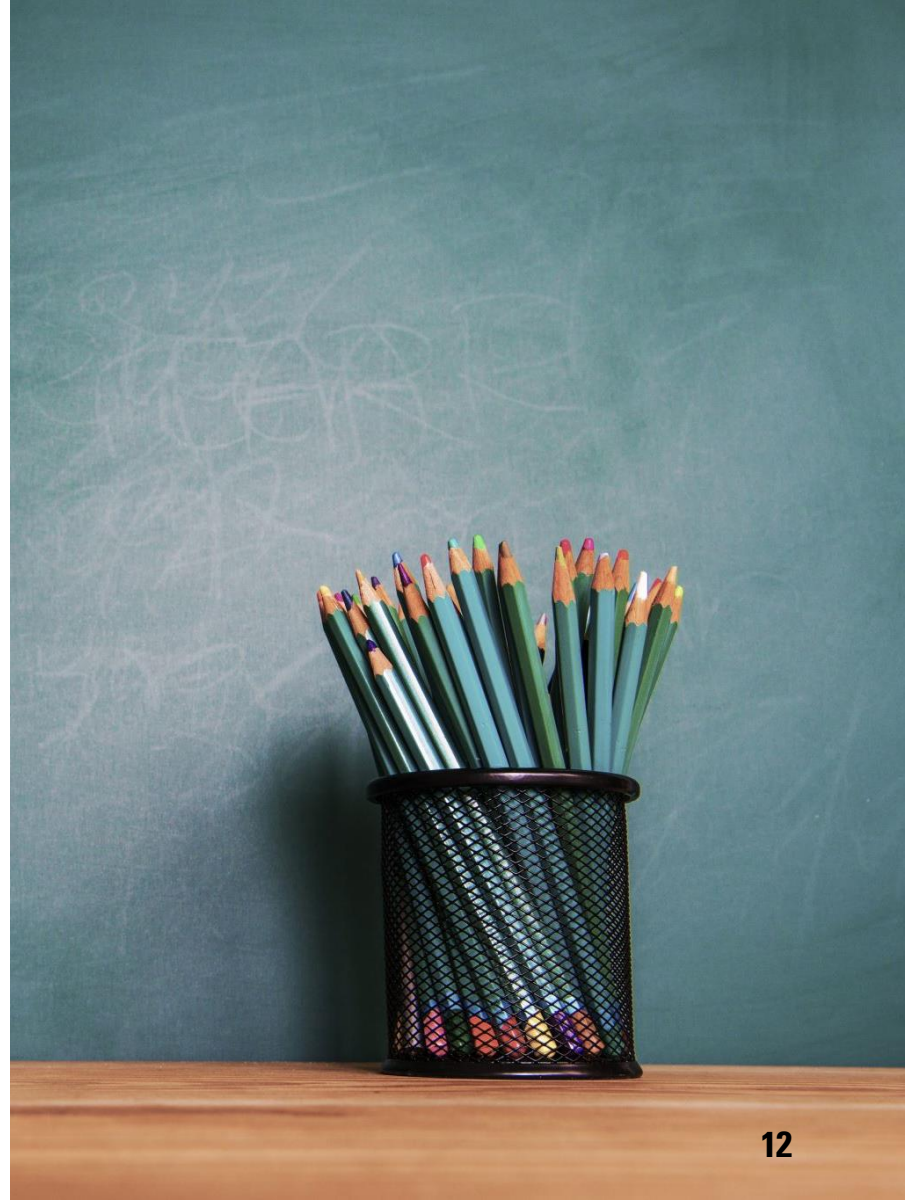
### 3. To Engage Every Member, You Have To Meet Members Where Their Interests Are.

- Some members are passionate about traditional union issues.
- Some aren't, and while you might be able to activate them briefly, these just aren't their drivers.
- **But everyone is passionate about something.**

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# Comprehensive Unionism

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## Three Frames of Comprehensive Unionism

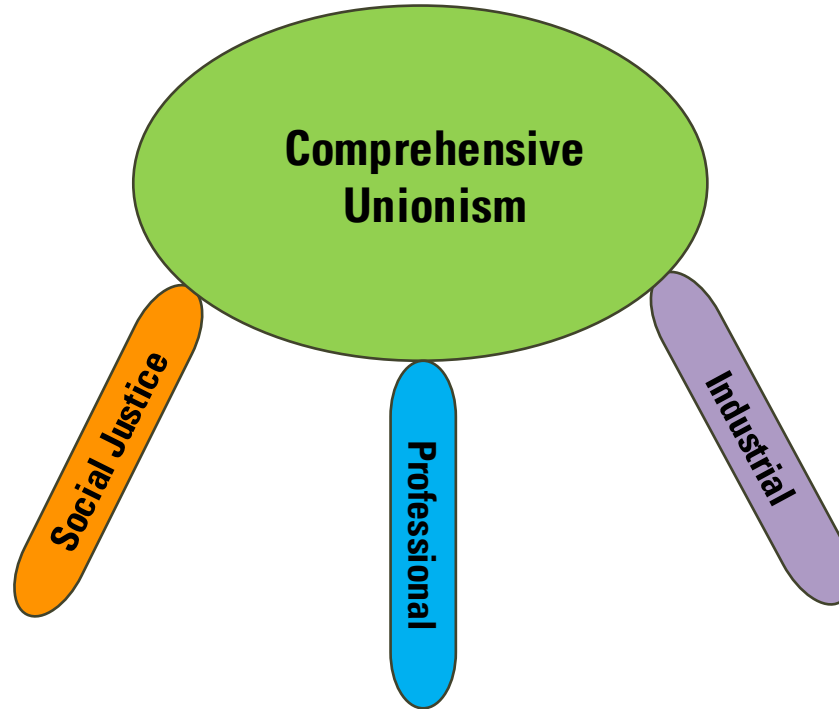


Adapted from "A Vision of Comprehensive Unionism," Jo Anderson (2018)

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Three Frames of Comprehensive Unionism



# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Three Frames of Comprehensive Unionism

### Reflection

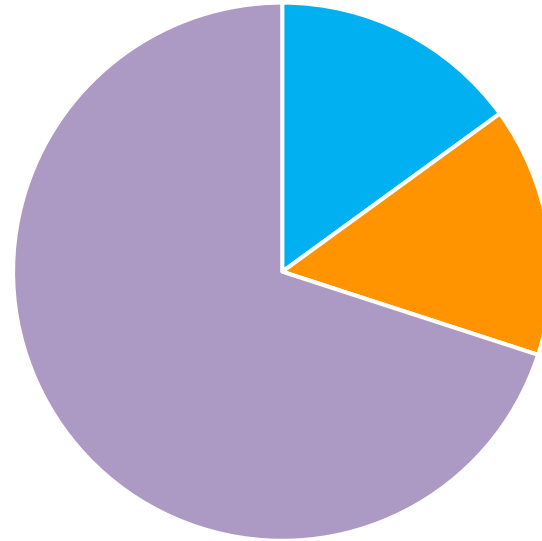
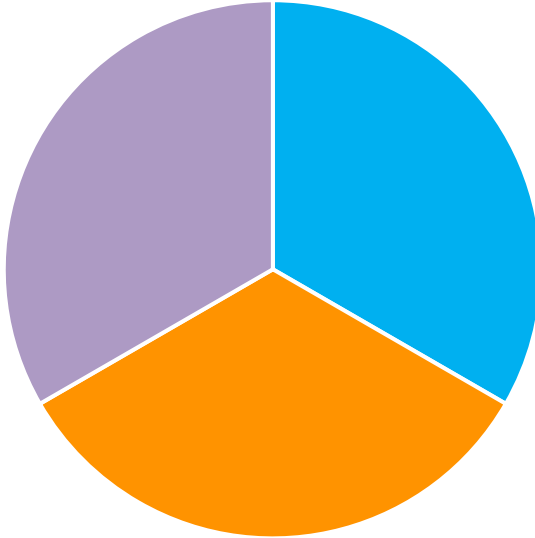
1. On a sheet of scratch paper draw a large circle.
2. Think about how much time and energy your chapter spends on:
  - “Industrial Issues”
  - “Professional Issues”
  - “Social Justice Issues”
3. Divide your circle into 3 wedges – like a pie chart – indicating approximately what proportion of time and energy you think your chapter spends on each.

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## Three Frames of Comprehensive Unionism

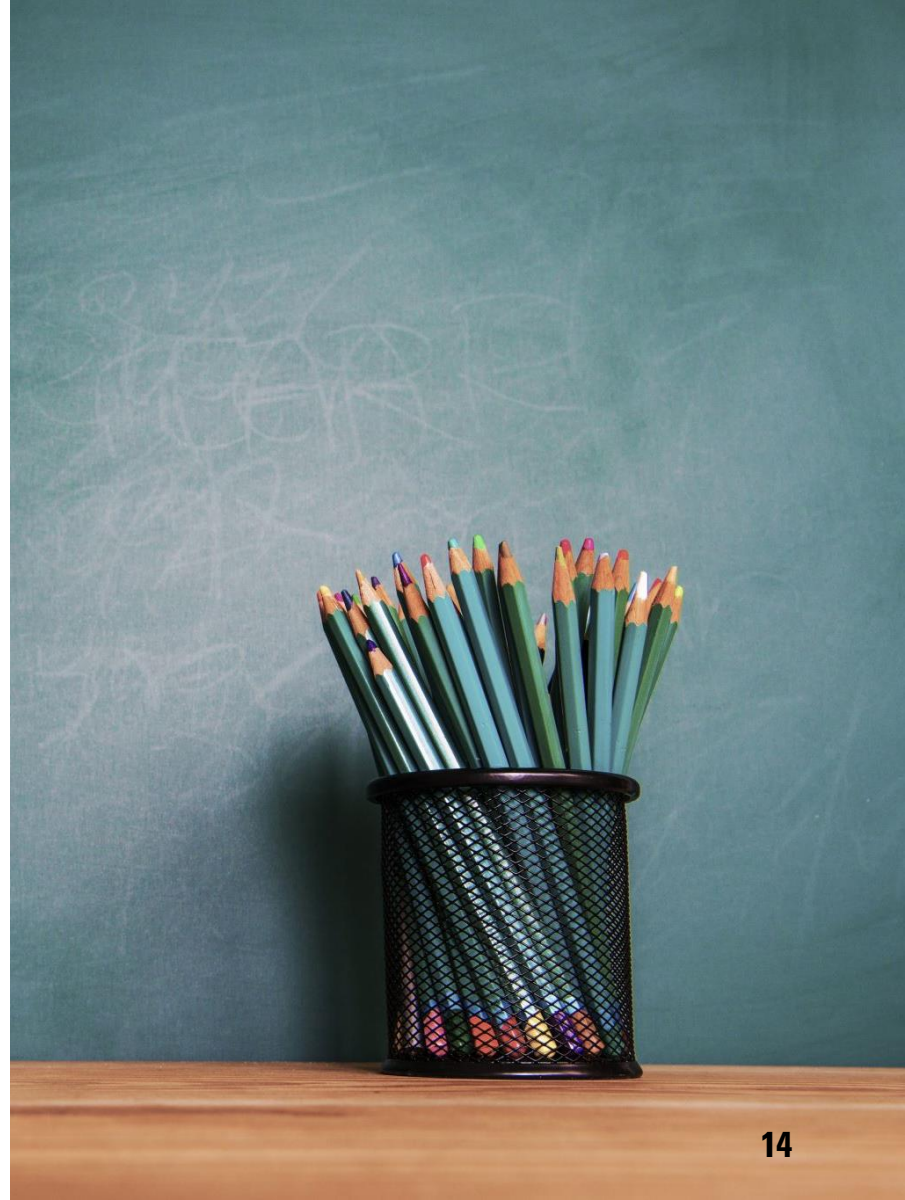
### Reflection



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# **Social Justice and Human Rights**

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# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Organizing Around Human Rights and Social Justice Issues

Equity through active engagement in the community and policies that impact educational and socio-economic opportunities.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Organizing Around Human Rights and Social Justice Issues

**Support members' passion for human rights and social justice work under the union banner:**

- Champion equity work and antiracist policies across the district.
- Organize community food drives, school supply drives, book drives.
- Conduct parent workshops.
- Forge alliances with community groups and support their causes.
- Participate in neighborhood projects.
- Advocate for community schools that include all stakeholder voices.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Organizing Around Human Rights and Social Justice Issues

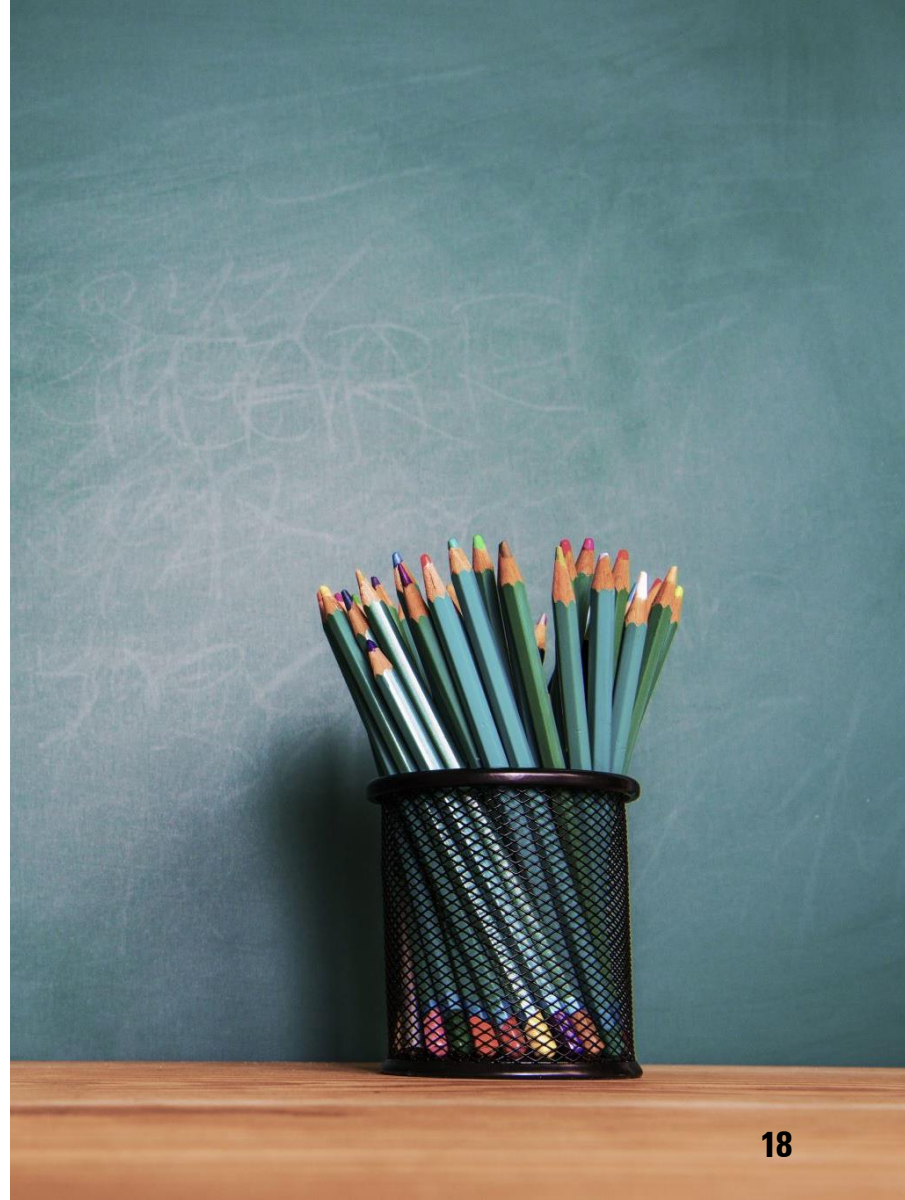
### *Think-Pair-Share:*

- Are there ways in which your union already works on social justice issues?
- Are there ways your union could begin to work on social justice issues?
- After seeing examples of organizing around human rights and social justice issues, do you have any new ideas your chapter could try to begin to engage members in this area?

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# **Academic and Professional Issues**

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# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Organizing Around Academic and Professional Issues

Assuming responsibility for the quality of the profession.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## What are Academic and Professional Issues?

**Initiatives that impact teaching and learning; quality of the profession:**

- Mentoring and Teacher Support
- Professional Growth
- Academic Committees
- Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs)
- School Site Councils

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Why organize around Academic and Professional Issues?

### Opportunity to:

- Demonstrate to the membership the value the chapter places on teaching and learning
- Engage members who are less concerned with financial matters
- Improve contract language and working conditions quickly because these issues tend to be less expensive for the district
- Win with the public because these proposals tend to benefit students directly and visibly – *Bargaining for the Common Good*

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## *Mentoring and Teacher Support - Examples*

### **Welcoming new members helps build union identity early:**

- Union welcome and networking events for new educators
- New employee orientations
- Adopt-a-teacher/buddy programs for new teachers
- Mentor teachers
- Induction stipends/release time
- PAR language

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## *Professional Growth - Examples*

**When members see their union as a source for quality professional growth, it builds connections, respect and loyalty**

- Send members (especially new members) to CTA conferences.
- Establish a member-run PD Committee within the chapter.
- Organize local educator-led training events.
- Negotiate credit for the CTA University Credit Program.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## *Academic Committees - Examples*

**If they don't already exist, consider creating committees with members from different schools, grade-levels and programs**

- Textbook adoptions
- Instruction, curriculum, and assessment
- Instructional technology
- Professional development
- Special education
- English Learners
- Social and emotional education/wellness/MTSS/PBIS

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## *Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) - Examples*

### **Approach LCAPs the way you would bargaining**

- Educate the membership on the importance of the LCAP
- Local LCAP team with members representing different roles
- Member input through surveys and focus groups
- Stakeholder alliances
- District LCAP committee

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## *School Site Councils - Examples*

**Any school that receives federal funding has a School Site Council, which develops the *School Plan for Student Achievement* (SPSA) and *Comprehensive School Safety Plans* (CSSP)**

Recruit union-positive teachers to run for SSC seats.

Offer SSC training to teachers and non-teacher members.

Establish "Coordinated SSC" meetings 1-2 times a year to compare procedures, budgets, SPSAs and CSSPs between schools.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Consider Bargaining

- Regular academic committee meetings with the district
- Details of the LCAP process – educator participation, timelines
- New and veteran teacher support programs
- Additional teacher-directed planning time or collaboration time (paid)
- Teacher-driven professional development programs (paid)
- More options for salary advancement through professional development
- Policies around consultation before adopting programs or materials
- Aspects of programs that greatly impact students and teachers – Sped, English Learner, AP & IB, SEL/wellness/MTSS/PBIS, etc
- School safety and academic freedom language

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Consider Consulting on

- Educational objectives
- Course content
- Curriculum
- Textbook adoptions

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Impact of Organizing Around Academic and Professional Issues

**Broadens the scope of a chapter's work to:**

- Strengthen union infrastructure through constant organizing.
- Grow member engagement, union identity, and support for other initiatives.
- Allow members' passion to drive union work in new and innovative directions.
- Build alliances with students, parents, families, and community groups around common interests and goals.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Think About How Your Chapter is Structured

### Officers/Executive Board

- Who oversees the various academic initiatives?
  - Are they spread out, is it the President, or is it someone else (or no one)?

One option is to bring all academic initiatives together under one person.

### Chapter Budget

- Is academic and professional spending comparable to spending in other areas?
- Does the chapter's budget include line items to support academic and professional issues?
  - Budgets for academic committees, mentorship programs, conferences, trainings, etc.?

Reminder - your budget reflects your priorities.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Organizing Around Academic and Professional Issues

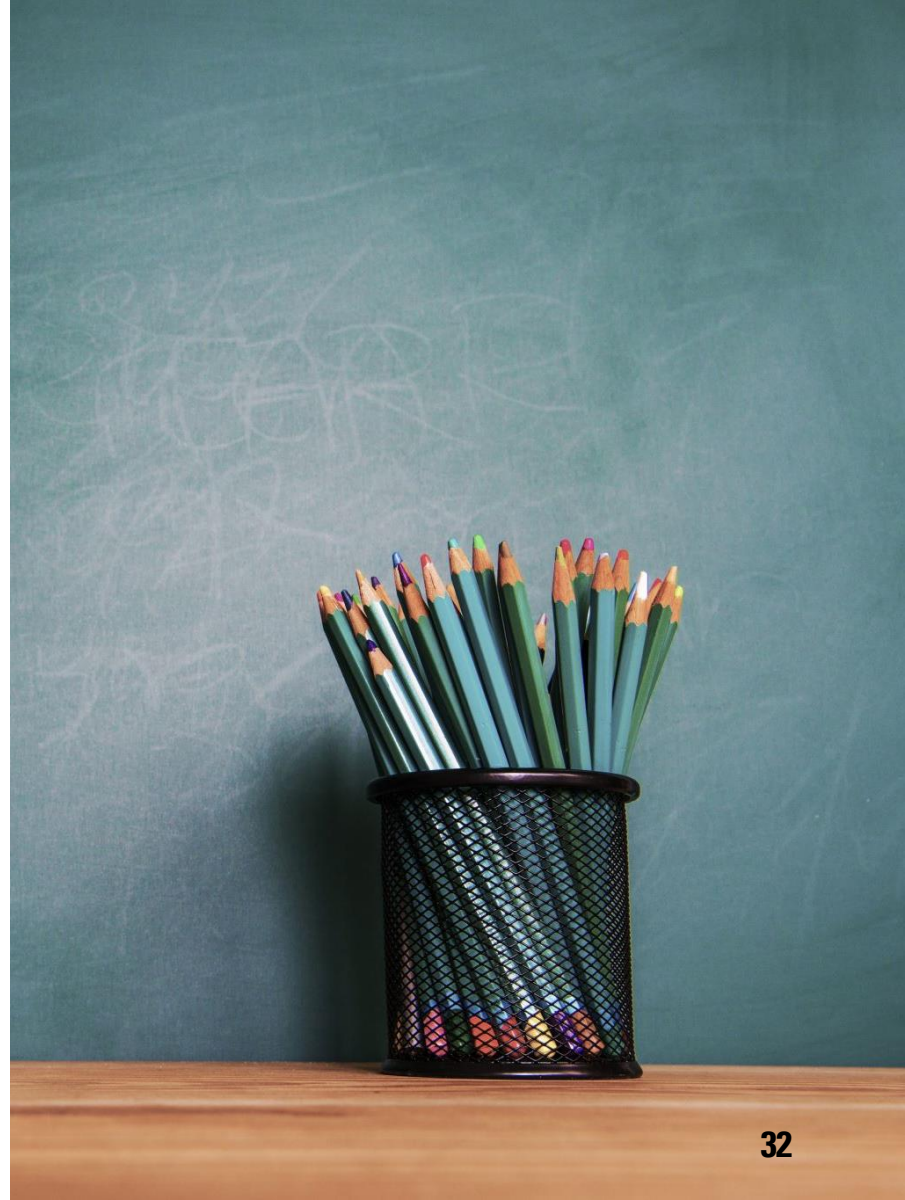
### *Think-Pair-Share:*

- Are there ways in which your union already works on professional issues?
- Are there ways your union could begin to work on professional issues?
- After seeing examples of organizing around professional issues, do you have any new ideas your chapter could try to begin to engage more members in this area?

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# Current Organizing Structure

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# Academic & Professional Issues

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**Think about your current academic and professional initiatives.**

- How many do you have?
- How successful are they?
- What impact do they have on the bargaining unit?

# Academic & Professional Issues

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**Which initiatives should you focus on to broaden the scope of the chapter's work?**

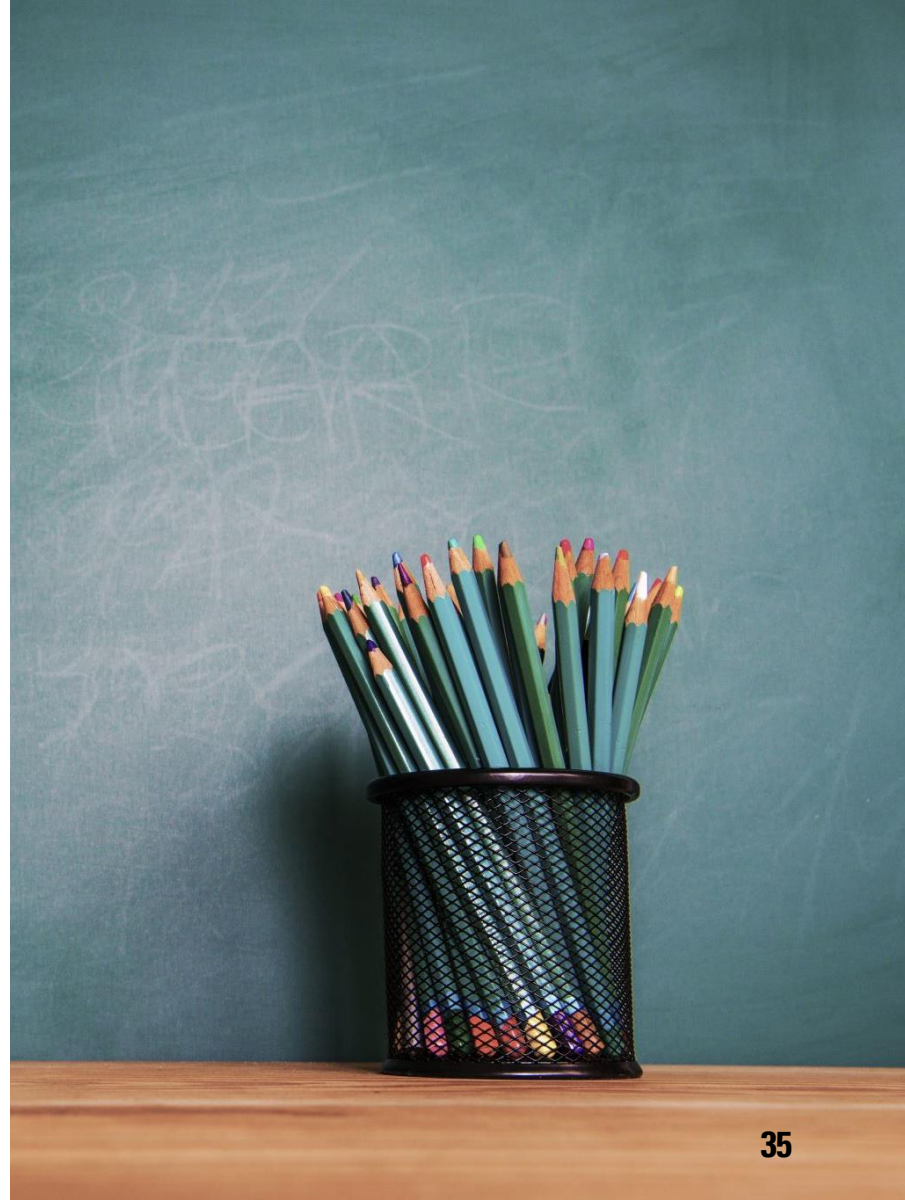
***Identify issues that are:***

- Widely Felt
- Deeply Felt
- Builds Leadership

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# Implementation Plan

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# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Action Plan Steps

- Step 1 - Identify initiatives to implement
- Step 2 - Determine who will oversee academic initiatives
- Step 3 - Create a timeline
- Step 4 - Determine resources
- Step 5 - Determine how you will recruit members

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## EJD can support locals to:

- Identify how much time and effort is spent on academic and professional issues.
- Identify which academic and professional issues are important to members.
- Identify ways to broaden the scope of the chapter's work.
- Develop and strengthen contract language and identify implications.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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## Activity That One Colleague

- Think about the colleagues at your site and identify ones that may be interested in:
  - Human Rights Issues
  - Social Justice Issues
  - Academic and Professional Issues
- Recruit them to get more involved in the union.

# Academic & Professional Issues

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**What questions do you have?**

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# Resources for Chapters and Members



[EJD Website](#)



Into the Classroom



Special Education Resources  
Guide



CTA/NEA Micro-  
Certifications

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# Contact Us

## Request Support Through Your Primary Contact Staff

- **Region 1** – Ma Bernadette Salgarino  
Karissa Tom
- **Region 2** – Chandra McPeters  
Michael Flores-Castaneda
- **Region 3** – Brian Guerrero  
Aisha Blanchard-Young
- **Region 4** – Karen Taylor  
Lisa Adams

CTA Regions



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