



NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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Great Public Schools for Every Student

1201 16th St, N.W. | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

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NEA Center for Organizing Staff and NEA Department Directors

FROM: Jim Testerman, Senior Director, Center for Organizing

DATE: March 10, 2018

RE: Center for Organizing February 2018 Report

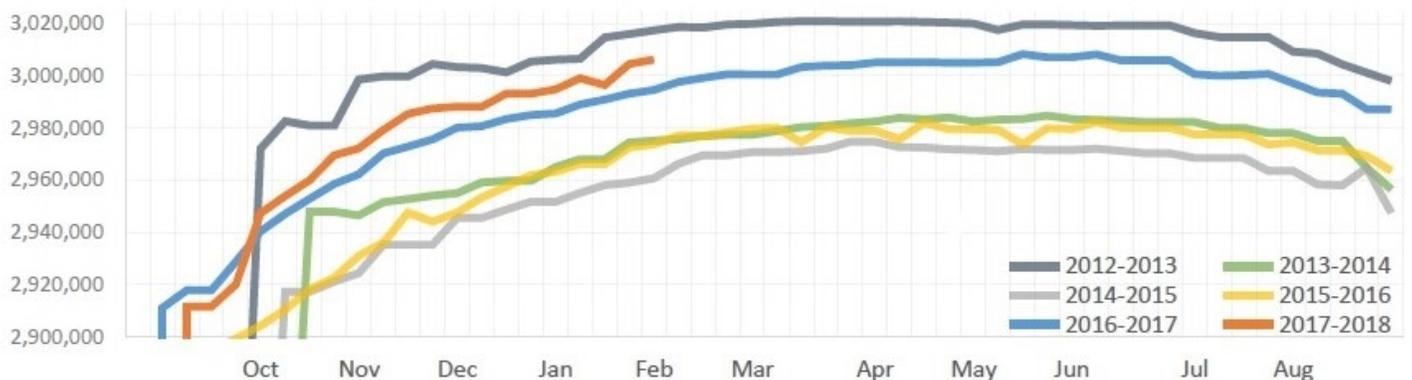
The NEA Center for Organizing (C4O) partners with Affiliates and Locals in organizing campaigns designed to develop best practices in member recruitment, member engagement, leadership development, and successful advocacy on the issues important to our members and our mission. These monthly reports provide just a sampling of this organizing activity.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership through the end of January 2018 surpassed the 3 million mark to 3,006,166 total members. 28 affiliates achieved net growth with 10 states gaining more than 1,000 members (CA, NY, FL, MN, WA, MD, NJ, HI, MA and UT). NEA-C4O continues to drive growth through the Winter Listening and Engagement Tour (WLET) campaign. For more information, including how to sign-up, visit the [WLET homepage](#), or contact C4O Organizational Specialist Matt Bennet at mbennet@nea.org or 202-258-7943.



Weekly Membership by Year — Δ This Week, PY



ENGAGEMENT ORGANIZING:

Delaware: Union leaders and building reps from the Christina Education Association (CEA) are preparing to lead targeted campaigns in select schools in the district to foster greater school safety. 5 schools in their district have reported that facilities have fallen dangerously into disrepair and school security equipment is either nonexistent or damaged beyond operation. CEA will work through worksite organizing committees to demonstrate how school staff can take the lead on demanding a safe learning environment if administrators are unwilling to address the issue.

Kentucky: Twenty-eight current and former educators are running for office in the Kentucky State Legislature's 2018 election cycle, many of them members of the Kentucky Education Association. The educators running for office come from a wide variety of positions, including college professors, high school and elementary teachers, academic librarians and coaches. [The Associated Press](#) detailed their exciting efforts and what motivated many of them to run for public office.

Ohio: The Ohio Education Association's Department of Organizing has been active in the early winter months. A synopsis of their activities, from political campaigns to activism on college campuses, can be [viewed here online](#).

Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Education Association Council's Organizing Cohort meets routinely to share and review different membership growth techniques in their state. Many of the local leaders involved are implementing organizing strategies they've learned from attending NEA-C4O trainings and events. A review of their recent training can be [viewed here online](#).

Indiana: After Association Representatives (ARs) with the Indianapolis Education Association (IEA) reported that their 10-minute meetings were poorly attended, the Indiana local developed a strategic plan to address the problem. They formulated examples of how ARs can promote empowering others to act in solidarity to solve a problem rather than simply resolving the problems on their own, thereby showcasing the union's presence and influence. In fact, a range of problems the ARs identified were later determined to be best solved by organizing as opposed to representation. The ARs felt better empowered to take these insights back to their worksites.



Sixty people attended a community organizing meeting for the Indianapolis chapter of the [Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools](#) (AROS,) led by AROS Executive Director Keron Blair. The attendees broke into action teams and worked on organizing plans to carry out a neighborhood canvass. Indianapolis-AROS and IEA continue to work to increase the presence of community schools in the Indianapolis area.

Maine: Leaders for the Tri-Town Education Association (T-TEA) have grown frustrated in recent years as new state funding to local schools has not been used to improve programs for students. T-TEA members are determined to reverse this trend as the school board begins work on next year's budget. Between now and May 18th, the local's organizing committee plans to involve members in the budget process by giving their personal accounts of how the lack of resources has directly affected them and their ability to teach effectively. [A flyer has been circulated](#) to T-TEA members, encouraging them to attend the upcoming school board budget meetings. T-TEA plans to be highly vocal and involved throughout the budget process and expect for any new revenue to be invested in programs and services for students.

Michigan: Members of the Grand Rapids Education Association (GREA) are sending a message to Betsy DeVos in her own backyard about the importance of special education programming. Educators are partnering with parents and circulating a petition calling for the removal of the district's Special Education Director due to mismanagement of the program, noncompliance with ADA, poor placement of students, and short-staffing. In a weeklong drive, worksite leaders collected more than 500 signatures to be delivered to the GR Board of Education. They are also looking to utilize NEA's Early Enrollment Campaign to increase membership growth this spring.



The Benton Harbor Education Association (BHEA) has begun a restorative justice campaign to develop a safer learning environment for their students and a consistent discipline policy. BHEA first filed a grievance to force the district's hand on training, by recruiting members to testify at school board meetings around the impact of trauma on the children and reached out to local media around unsafe learning conditions. BHEA then hosted an all-bargaining unit workshop on restorative practices and began building for a membership blitz event. Five members signed up on the spot, 4 were put on payment plans, and 7 leaders were identified from each work site to serve as the point person for the school visits.

My Schools/My Voice (MSMV):

Ohio: The Sylvania Education Association (SEA) held an all-day in-service for 70 teachers, support staff, administrators and school board members to promote greater collaborative efforts between all four groups. This in-service program promotes SEA's implementation plan of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) by creating equity teams amongst worksites to address the needs of students in the district. SEA plans to host a district-wide community program showcasing the organizing plans developed by the equity teams.

North Carolina: Ronda Mays, President of the Forsyth County Association of Educators (FCAE), extended an invitation to the Superintendent of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, Dr. Beverly Emory, to attend a recent FCAE Association Representative (AR) meeting. Sixty-five ARs were given the chance to hear directly from Dr. Emory and ask their own questions on a range of issues, including lesson plans, planning time, testing and workplace environment. The meeting was very productive, as the ARs who attended discussed how empowered they felt to share their voice and their hope that this will lead to more dialogue with Dr. Emory in the future.

Utah: The Utah Education Association (UEA) will continue to host Educator Day on the Hill (EDOH) every Friday during the Utah State Legislative Session. Last year's efforts saw more than 400 educators participating to ensure that educators have a voice in making education policy. EDOH has proven to be a successful recruitment tool for UEA by continuously offering meaningful and relevant ways to engage educators at the local and state level.

New Mexico: NEA-Las Cruces (NEA-LC) quickly mobilized after hearing of a possible new merit pay stipend policy to be considered by the New Mexico Public Education Department, without the input of local school districts and violating their collective bargaining agreement. NEA-LC leaders prepared and presented a [mini-white paper](#) detailing their many concerns. Most notably, the new policy rewarded only 2% of educators, was based on a contested and invalid evaluation, would only be a one-time award, and caused divisiveness among school staff. After reading the white paper, the Las Cruces Board of

Directors voiced its support for NEA-LC’s position, putting a hold on the stipend until it could negotiate with NEA-LC on the issue.

Colorado: Pikes Peak Education Association (PPEA) is using professional issues organizing to increase visibility for the organization, identify professional practice leaders, create a pipeline for new leaders, help PPEA get into buildings, and build power in the District. Their efforts led to PPEA’s first Restorative Practice Summit, where attendance was more than twice the number of participants initially anticipated. The attendees represented a wide variety of backgrounds—teachers, social workers, coaches, restorative practice district coaches, counselors, Special Education teachers, and administrators, as PPEA works to build their community partnerships.



Schools.

New Hampshire: More than 80 members of the Manchester-NEA (M-NEA) attended a membership meeting focusing on upcoming district negotiations, which are anticipated will have difficulty in coming to an agreement. Twenty-two members signed up to form a Communication Action Committee, pledging to support the Negotiating Committee and develop actions for members in support of educator demands. The committee plans to also reach out to parents, students and businesses in Manchester to generate greater support for Manchester Public



Massachusetts: The Education Association of Worcester (EAW) achieved a huge win as their bargaining team agreed to a tentative agreement with their school district. For the first time ever, EAW secured paid holidays, a 10% raise over three years, and limited required meeting times, while securing better pay for attending these meetings. The biggest gain, however, has been the increased engagement amongst many EAW members, as they organized themselves and each other to reach the tentative agreement. Many EAW members now feel that

they have a voice through their union and a new respect from an administration that routinely ignores them.

South Carolina: The South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) is committed to recruiting and retaining educators by reducing class sizes, testing, and adding wraparound services to help combat poverty. The SCEA believes that community schools address all things needed to recruit & retain educators, and is a better solution to improving underfunded public schools. The SCEA has been working across the state of South Carolina to raise the awareness on how ESSA & Community Schools can benefit students, educators, education support professionals, and the community. Last year the SCEA held ESSA townhalls and found that the lack of equity is one the biggest problems facing many school districts. To address these equity issues, the SCEA has embarked on the ESSA My Schools/My Voice campaign. The SCEA will be using the opportunity checklist to gather information about the inequities facing public schools. We are currently providing training to members in the targeted locals regarding the statewide ESSA plan and how it will impact them in the classroom. The SCEA plans to conduct more than 500 opportunity checklist surveys through school site visits, AR meetings in targeted schools, and trainings, as well as other activities.

EARLY CAREER AND ASPIRING EDUCATORS



South Carolina: The South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) conducted their inaugural Early Career Educators meeting with sixteen educators within their first ten years of teaching. The group accepted the challenge of hosting The SCEA’s “Read Across South Carolina’s Carnival” event and began planning for the first SCEA New Educator Conference. NEA and SCEA staff continue to partner together to coordinate these and future events.

TRAININGS

Arizona: The Arizona Education Association partnered with NEA-C4O to conduct its Organizing Institute. Participants from three locals attended the Institute and learned basic organizing skills that they will bring back to their locals. Facilitators trained member leaders on organizing conversations, tracking data, and power dynamics, as well as several other organizing topics. The attendees participated in a field experience, which consisted of having conversations with potential and active members in the Roosevelt School District. During those school visits, they had 98 conversations, identified 6 new leaders and signed up 6 new members.



WE WANT YOUR STORIES!

C4O always loves to learn about and showcase how our state affiliates and local associations are organizing for the profession we all hold dear to our hearts. Do you have an organizing story you’d like us to know about? Feel free to email it to us at glueteam@nea.org. Include a 1-2 paragraph description, links to news stories (if they’re readily available), photos or any other supporting documentation.