



**OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP**  
**ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS: AFFIRM-ANSWER-REDIRECT**

<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>AFFIRM</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>	<b>REDIRECT</b>
<b>Dues Costs:</b> “I don’t think it is worth being involved with the union because dues are so expensive.”	I can understand why you would be concerned about dues.	The dues are _____. The way our dues work is _____.	There are two ways that we get our power as a union. Money and people.
<b>Free Riders:</b> “Why do I have to join? Because I do get the benefits without paying for it.”	I can understand why you would feel that way.	Currently, (% of members) of our colleagues pay dues to fund the bargaining of our contract.	As you know, we are trying to solve (insert issue here) this year and our association is working hard to make sure we are able to function as professionals in our work. Since we agree on that, we need everyone involved to win this fight. Will you join?
<b>Bad/Lazy Workers:</b> “I have heard that unions have members who are incredibly lazy or bad teachers. Why would I be involved with a union that is just going to protect bad educators?”	I can understand your concern.	A union can’t protect anyone that is unable or unwilling to do their job. It is simply about having a fair set of rules that apply to everyone.	There is a process of handling those unable or unwilling to do their job. It is a distraction to talk about the union protecting lazy workers rather than the issues that concern us. (Specify an issue you have heard.)
<b>Futility:</b> “Why should I be involved with the union? The union can’t do anything about classroom size.”	I can understand your concern. Classroom size can be a challenging issue to address.	In fact, union members have been able to get classroom size language into many of their contracts.	Right now that is a decision that is solely up to management. As a union if we fight together we can have a voice in decisions around classroom size. We deserve to be a part of the process.
<b>Self-Interested:</b> “I have heard that teacher unions care more about themselves than their students. I care about the kids, I’m not selfish.”	I can understand your concern.	There have been years of attempts to discredit educators. Human beings sometimes make mistakes, but no teacher got into this profession for the fame or fortune.	Teachers get involved in their unions because they do care and know that their working conditions affect the ability for their students to learn. States and countries with strong unions actually produce higher student achievement results. When educators come together and act as a strong voice for public schools, they are able to push for more school funding, adequate resources for struggling children, and state assessments that measure genuine student progress rather than good test-taking skills.
<b>Too Political/Liberal:</b> “The association should stay out of politics. I’m a Republican, not a Democrat.”	That’s a completely valid feeling.	Because every decision about public schools is made by elected officials, we do endorse candidates and get involved in many political issues at the federal, state, and local level.	However, these decisions are made by members and any endorsement is based on a candidate’s support of public education and educators. We also legally can’t use member dues dollars for PACs and you are free to support whomever you think is best for education.