

Broward Teachers Union

***Steward
Handbook***



Engaging & Empowering Educators

2017-18



Engaging & Empowering Educators

Mission Statement



MISSION STATEMENT

To engage and empower members to improve their professional and personal lives through their collective voices.

VISION STATEMENT

United and empowered professionals leading the workforce of tomorrow!

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Encourage involvement and membership expansion by developing opportunities for engagement in all facets of our union.

Goal 2: Advocate for and promote fair and equitable compensation and a safe, healthy and respectful working environment.

Goal 3: Provide quality leadership and professional development programs that expand and sustain our organizational capacity and diversity and advance the professional growth of our members.

Goal 4: Develop and sustain close community partnerships and successful coalitions in order to impact and influence the political process with credibility and integrity.

Goal 5: Serve as the professional voice of our members.

WHO WE ARE

The Broward Teachers Union proudly represents the education, technical support, education support professionals and charter school professionals of Broward County.

BTU-EP: BTU - Education Professionals (Broward Instructional Staff).

BTU-TSP: BTU - Technical Support Professionals (Broward Technical Support Staff).

BTU-CSP: BTU - Charter School Professionals (Pembroke Pines Charter Schools Instructional Staff).

BTU-ESP: BTU - Education Support Professionals (Broward Paraprofessional Staff).

BTU-R: BTU - Retired Education Professionals (Retirees).



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Telephone Numbers Stewards Should Have



Broward Teachers Union Office.....954-486-6250

Fax Number.....954-739-1803

(for most up to date information , please go to BTUonline.com)

Member Services

Teachers Financial Services954-724-4774

BrightStar Credit Union954-486-2728

Health, Dental, Vision (District Benefits Office)754-321-3100

State and District Services

Main School Board Switchboard.....754-321-0000

District Certification Information.....754-321-2348

Florida Certification (FDOE).....800-445-6739

My Learning Plan/Professional Learning Hotline.....754-321-5055

iObservation Hotline754.321.5085

Employee Evaluations754-321-5067

Talent Development754-321-5006

Teacher Induction for Effectiveness and Retention (TIER)754-321-5026

School Board Benefits Department754-321-3100

School Board Payroll Department.....754-321-2450

School Board Personnel Records Department.....754-321-0100

School Board Leaves Department.754-321-3130



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e-Mail Addresses Stewards Should Have



All union leaders and staff can be contacted via e-mail. Stewards can use the directory below or access the union’s e-mail address directory by logging on to btuonline.com. (for most up to date information , please go to BTUonline.com)

**All general comments and questions should be e-mailed to:
communications@btuonline.com**

- Anna Fusco, Presidentafusco@btuonline.com
- Terry Preuss, First Vice President.....tpreuss@btuonline.com
- Roosevelt McClary, III, Secretary.....Roosevelt.mcclary@browardschools.com
- Christopher Townley, Treasurer.....Christopher.townley@browardschools.com
- Matthew Decker, TSP Vice President.....Matthew.decker@browardschools.com
- W. Tyler Kapela, CSP Vice Presidenttykapela@pinescharter.com
- Bernie Kemp, ESP Vice President.....bkemp@btuonline.com

- Cami Acceus, Field Staff Representativecacceus@btuonline.com
- Barbara Cavazzi, Receptionistbcavazzi@btuonline.com
- Allison Clarke, Field Staff Representativeaclarke@btuonline.com
- Holly Corless, Database Managerhcorless@btuonline.com
- Shannon D’Avi, Administrative Assistant.....sdavi@btuonline.com
- Claudia Delatorre, Bookkeeperbookkeeper@btuonline.com
- Steve Feldman, Field Staff Representative.....sfeldman@btuonline.com
- James Herard, Political Organizerjherard@btuonline.com
- Carol Herz, Co-Director of Communicationscherz@btuonline.com
- Paula Jostad, Administrative Assistantpjostad@btuonline.com
- Jennifer Lamont, Chief of Staffjlamont@btuonline.com
- Tom Lander, Field Staff Representativetlander@btuonline.com
- Tiffany Lawson, Administrative Assistant.....tlawson@btuonline.com
- Kenny Minchew, Organizerkminchew@btuonline.com
- Shafeza Moonab, Professional Development Coordinator.....smoonab@btuonline.com
- Anna Marie Pierpont, Field Staff Representativeapierpont@btuonline.com
- Dane Ramson, Field Staff Representativedramson@btuonline.com
- Rick Reece, Co-Director of Communicationsrreece@btuonline.com
- Jennifer Reeves, Accountant-CPAjreeves@btuonline.com
- Diane Watts, Field Staff Representative.....dwatts@btuonline.com



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Steward Responsibilities



Stewards' Roles

1. Develop and maintain a visible union presence at your worksite.
2. Engage and recruit new hires and potential members.
3. Build and deepen relationships with current members.
4. Lead efforts to move members to activists and activists to leaders.
5. Advocate for members and public education at your worksite, district, local, state and national levels.
6. Seek opportunities to strengthen skills and knowledge as a leader and organizer.

Special contract provisions have been negotiated to provide additional incentives for Education Professionals working in schools. They are:

- EP Release time for union business - EP Article 29, D
- EP Release time to attend meetings - EP Article 29, Y
- EP Super seniority placement for summer school employment* - EP Article 6, F, 4
- EP Super-seniority from surplussing* - EP Article 25, D, 6
- ESP Super-seniority exemption from layoff - ESP Article 5, W or 14, B, 2
- TSP Order of layoffs - TSP Article 14, A, 5

*** *Designated Stewards ONLY***

Special note:

Incentives are available **ONLY as long as you remain a steward. Except for surplussing, they are available to ALL stewards, not just designated stewards.*



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Things Every Steward Should Do



Every Steward Should:

1. Meet should schedule a Steward/Administration meeting and complete the Steward/Administration Guide within the first six weeks of the school year.
2. Ask each school-based education professional if s/he is receiving a Basic or Advanced incentive, especially third-year Annual Contract employees, who should apply so they can receive the incentive in their fourth year (Article 21).
3. Stress the fact that in any meeting with the administrator or manager that may be disciplinary in nature or lead to disciplinary action, the employee must be provided with a written notice stating the infraction and has the right to union representation. The employee has three (3) days to obtain representation.
4. Notify BTU staff of any violation of the contract. Call and ask if you have any doubts.
5. For school-based EP stewards, organize a faculty council; develop a professional development team, and a strong student discipline procedure for the school, as outlined in the contract.
6. Instruct members to not answer questions or provide a written statement without representation.
7. When in doubt, ask.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working condition, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.”



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Things Every Steward Should Know



1. Love the Union

"Everyone is union, some just haven't joined yet." This quote by our president Anna Fusco expresses her passion for our union. Without your stewardship and passion our union would dissolve. Thank you for the love of union it takes to be a steward.

2. Be Credible

Read the contract, learn the rules and follow the contract yourself. Management and members are watching you. You are the example.

3. Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses

Stewards are always being asked questions. Don't act like you know what you're talking about when you don't -- your friends and your co-workers will see through it right away. Find out, and get back to them.

4. Figure out where to turn for answers

Your union officers and staff are knowledgeable in contract interpretation and many areas of labor law. Other union activists can be important resources. Depending on where they work, there are undoubtedly those who know more than anyone what goes on behind management's closed doors.

5. Knowing how to delegate tasks is your most important skill

Recruiting volunteers is an easily learned skill. Some people do it naturally, others benefit from specific training in recruiting or team-building.

6. If you try to do it all yourself, it won't work

You won't be able to do anything on your own as well as you could with the help of others. If you are always frustrated, you'll burn out. The more people you get involved, the more you can accomplish.

7. Your job is to empower people

Give a man a fish; he'll eat for the day. Teach a man to fish; he'll eat for a lifetime. If all you do is solve other people's problems for them, what are they going to do when you're not there? Help people learn how to solve their own problems.

8. Ask a lot of questions

Socrates became famous for a reason. The best ideas come from picking a lot of minds and getting people to think about old problems in new ways.

9. Learn how to listen

When grievances and personnel problems occur, sometimes just being willing to listen is the most important thing you can do. When you're organizing you need to know how other people feel and how they view the situation before you can influence them. Ask and listen.

10. Don't allow management to mistreat you

When you are representing your co-workers you are your supervisor's equal. You are both intelligent adults. On the job, your supervisor may have authority over you. But on union business, you are his/her equal.

11. Never assume that management knows more than you

Most supervisors have little understanding of contract rights or labor law. Generally, they have experience in other areas. Anything you learn about employees' rights on the job makes you more of an expert in that area than they are. Know your contract.

12. Choose your battles

Defending your fellow employees is an important part of a union steward's job, but if that is all you do you're always on the defensive. If you identify issues and take the initiative to demand changes, you will make important progress. Don't let management control the agenda. Be proactive and pick the issues where you think you can make some headway.

13. Always get back to people

If you want your co-workers to trust you, be responsible and reliable. Do not promise things you can't deliver, and be sure to follow through on commitments you make.

14. Be organized in your own life

Pick a system and keep to it. How are you going to keep track of appointments and meetings? Where are you going to keep notes and reminders to yourself? Throw out papers you do not need, and have a good system for finding the stuff you keep.

15. Maintain a sense of humor

On one hand, ridicule can be a powerful weapon against an irrational supervisor. On the other hand, do not take yourself too seriously. If you get self-righteous, you won't learn from your mistakes, and you will turn people off.















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Membership Features and Benefits



Join the BTU for these “member only” benefits!

-  Maintains a local office with immediate accessibility
-  Provides local staff experts to help with your immediate problems and questions
-  Offers immediate consultation and representation when problems arise at your work site
-  Provides legal representation in employment-related issues by a staff of labor attorneys
-  Represents you in grievances and problems with the administration
-  Advocates for your interests
-  Supports candidates who work for the quality of public schools and who support teacher rights
-  Advocates against providing public money to support private and religious schools
-  Helps save members money through member benefits and discount programs
-  Provides access to local, state and national publications to keep you informed of issues affecting the teaching profession
-  Free professional development workshops, seminar and opportunities to help with professional/personal growth, all with ESES points that don't expire!
-  Maintains an up-to-date website and social networking site pages



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Grievance Representation



As a grievance representative:

A grievance is a violation of the contract. Some workers believe anything they don't like about work is a grievance. YOU are the "eyes and ears" of the Broward Teachers Union in the workplace. The first task of the steward is to LISTEN to your members' stories. Having given a sympathetic ear to your members, you may then determine if it necessitates further investigation. Is it a gripe or grievance?

The following are some questions to pursue:

1. **Who** is involved?

Name of employee, job title. Who witnessed the incident or was involved in the situation? Who are the management/supervisors/administrators involved?

2. **When** did it happen?

Time and date

3. **Where** did it happen?

Location

4. **What** happened or failed to happen?

A written narrative

5. **Why** is this a grievance?

Contract Article, State Statute, State or Federal Law not adhered to.

6. **How** should this be remedied?

The fix, the outcome, an action plan

You must determine which action or failure to act on the part of the administration and/or management is the basis for the concern. Gather all of the specifics. Ask questions.

Example: *The principal states he/she has received a directive or memo from the district and all education professionals must do as told.*

Respond: *We would like to see the memo!*

- * The Bill of Rights still exists, and the administration and/or management do not control the Freedom of Speech clause.
- * Members may not always bring their complaints or concerns to the steward. That is because they may be scared, or they do not know they have been wronged and something can be done about it.

- * Once you have investigated the incident, you must determine if the members' rights have been violated in any of the following ways:

Contract

Contract violations involve such matters as wages, hours, work environment, terms and conditions of employment, etc. The contract language usually spells out actions and procedures.

Past Practice

No contract contains every practice of a job. If the practice has been in place for an extended period and is accepted by both employees and administration (orally or written) or neither side has ever objected, a change of this practice may constitute a violation.

Fair Treatment

If the administration and management discriminate based on union activity, race, age, sex, nationality, sexual orientation or religion, the union may pursue such actions. Stewards should ask the aggrieved member to keep a notebook and write down what was done and said, complete with dates, places and any witnesses.

Administrative Rules, Policies or Responsibilities

The administration has certain responsibilities it must carry out. If the administration fails to fulfill its responsibilities or violates its own school board policies, it may be the basis for further union action.

If you are unsure how to determine what action may be taken for a certain problem, seek the assistance of other members, experienced stewards, or contact your union field staff representative. Making a determination is often difficult because the administration can use sophisticated ways to violate members' rights.

- * If a situation just plain seems unfair, trust your instincts even if you cannot determine which area to direct a response. With experience, you can organize your members around any unfair action and effectively make it a concern by forcing administration to deal with the issue.

Meeting with Administration & Management

- * Anticipate the administrator and management's possible reactions and have suggestions ready in advance. Prepare your statements.
- * Conference with the administrator and manager. *Remember that this is a meeting of equals.* You are acting as an official representative of the union and not merely as an employee under the administrator's supervision. Be confident and state your concerns and solutions.



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10 Secrets to a Successful Grievance

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1. Have a Plan

Shooting from the hip when going into a grievance session is dangerously close to shooting yourself in the foot. Meet with your grievant beforehand. Review all the arguments. Decide on your best evidence. Talk about strategy - the plan for how the meeting is likely to go. Know what your desired outcome is.

If your grievant is going to testify, go through a rehearsal. Ask all the questions that you think management may ask when they try to undermine his/her testimony. Make sure the answers are what they should be.

2. No Surprises

Make sure you know everything about what happened in the case. Nothing destroys a game plan more than finding out new information in the middle of a grievance hearing, like witnesses you don't know about, or prior warnings.

3. Don't Lose Your Cool

If you want to maintain control of the meeting, start by maintaining **your** self-control. That is not to say that anger or emotion cannot be effective tools for you to use. However, do not be spontaneous. Any outbursts should be a part of your plan.

4. Be Realistic About Your Chances

Understand going into the session whether you are in a strong position or a weak one. What does your contract say about the law or enforceable policies? If the facts are clearly on your side, do not give an inch until you want to.

However, most grievances are not that black and white. Often it's a situation that is new, that was not anticipated the last time the contract was negotiated. Be sure you know if you are building a case on concrete or sand. Discuss the odds of winning in advance with your grievant.

5. Know Where the Other Side Stands

Put yourself in the employer's shoes for a minute and think about how they will present their arguments. Consider how they will defend their actions, and know before you walk into the room what your response will be to their presentation.

6. Don't Get Personal

You want to challenge management's actions, but you do not want to attack people personally. If you make it personal, it is harder for the other side to agree that you are right. If management makes it personal, do not get baited into a shouting match. Do not let your grievant call the boss a stupid clown - no matter how true it may be. It will only help prove their claim of a pattern of inappropriate conduct on the part of the grievant.

7. Ask Questions

Look for the inconsistencies in management's arguments, and pick them apart. Do not let them off the hook if they offer evasive answers. Be persistent. If their side of the story is a fairy tale, chances are there will be contradictions in their arguments, witnesses, evidence, and/or statements - find them.

8. Have Notes, Take Notes

Never go into a grievance hearing without a written outline of the arguments you are going to present, and the evidence you have to back it up.

During the hearing, take good notes - especially when management is making their case. Nothing slows a supervisor down more than knowing you are writing down what they say, word for word. Good notes will also help you prepare if you need to appeal the case further.

9. Have Written Evidence

If it is a fact, people are more likely to believe something written down. Stewards should prepare complete documentation.

If you have copies of relevant official documents, hand them out at the hearing. If your argument entails a specific chronology of events, type it out and distribute it. Written documents easily become the point of reference for everybody's discussion. If they are your documents, then you are controlling the discussion.

10. Stay United

Never disagree among yourselves during a grievance hearing. Be especially careful if management asks a question that you did not anticipate. Feel free to call for a caucus, so you can step outside and discuss something in private with your grievant. Never show management that there is anything but full agreement on your side of the table.



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Bulletin Boards



Bulletin Board Guidelines:

- Keep your bulletin board neat and uncluttered.
- Keep your bulletin board up-to-date for all units. (Remove old handouts and add new.)
- Make your bulletin board attractive and easy to read.
- Judge what goes on the bulletin board carefully. Some items are best distributed in mailboxes or to individuals.
- Include important information from BTU communications or from the BTU website on the bulletin board.
- Place your bulletin board in a central, well-visited location.
- More than one bulletin board may be necessary.

REMEMBER -- *BTU has the right to at least one unencumbered bulletin board. No other organization, member or education professional can use or post material on the union bulletin board. All other information goes on an all-purpose board or designated area; i.e. in-service info, vacancy notices, rentals, thank you notes, etc. (Contract language: EP 29, C • ESP 5, E, 1 • TSP 5, C)*



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Steward Leadership Training Program



Steward Leadership Training Program

In an effort to empower education professionals through education and to develop leaders for the advancement of professionalization, the Broward Teachers Union offers various levels of steward training. **It is possible for stewards to receive up to half of their dues as a rebate if certain requirements as highlighted on the Steward Checklist have been met.** Upon completion of this program, each steward should have attained the following skills and knowledge:

1. Utilize the Steward/Administrator Discussion Guidelines.
2. Know the role and duties of the steward.
3. Organize and participate in a fully functional Faculty Council for school based stewards.
4. Lead efforts to move members to activists and activists to leaders.
5. Conduct membership meetings at school or work sites.
6. Disseminate material and act as a liaison between the BTU staff and the union members.
7. Promote membership and activism in the BTU and COPE-TIGER.
8. Act as a resource for the members.
9. Act as an advocate/representative for the members.
10. Possess rudimentary knowledge of contract negotiations.
11. Possess knowledge of contract language, salary, benefits, and working conditions.
12. Possess knowledge of the grievance procedure and act as a representative at the informal level of the grievance procedure.
13. Be able to inform members of their basic contractual rights.
14. Possess rudimentary knowledge of administrative law.



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BTU COPE-TIGER

FAQ's



Q. What is COPE-TIGER?

A. COPE-TIGER is the Political Action Committee of the Broward Teachers Union and is established in accordance with state and local election laws.

Q. Why does the BTU need a political action committee?

A. Politics can mean your job and your union! The legislative process is the foundation of collective bargaining and a good contract. We help elect legislators who become strong advocates for our causes in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C. Decisions on everyday concerns are made in the political arena. Salaries, certification, insurance, career advancement and retirement affect each one of us. We concentrate our efforts to elect friends of education. To be successful, we must be a viable, visible political entity.

Q. Why should I give COPE \$1 per month in dues?

A. Your donation to COPE is tangible evidence of your commitment and support. COPE dollars go toward communicating with you, the community and our elected officials. Your dollars support our lobbying program, which includes a staff lobbyist, and lobbying teams, COPE activists attending political functions and political club/organizational dues. All of these keep the BTU in the minds of our legislators. COPE dollars pay for journal ads and positive public relations for our union. COPE money is also used to make campaign contributions to candidates who support our educational causes at the local, state and national level. The \$1 a month that you give to BTU COPE-TIGER, combined with all of those of your colleagues, gets the BTU interests and needs to people who can make things happen.

Q. How does COPE-TIGER decide to support or oppose an issue?

A. BTU members give us direction on issues. We research the issues, disseminate information via publications, school meetings and phone calls, and then solicit input from you through surveys, meetings and direct conversation. We work for you.

Q. Why give to COPE instead of directly to a candidate?

A. The primary objective of funds is to support candidates who support improved public education programs. It is essential that the elected officials clearly recognize the link between the union's political arm and its legislative program. This relationship becomes unclear if members make individual contributions. Additionally, the impact of individual small contributions is not as great as group efforts. When the BTU gives money to candidates, recognition is obtained for all members in Broward County. It is the total organization that lobbies for you with the school board as well as state and national legislatures. Recognition is essential to political influence.

Q. Will COPE-TIGER tell me how to vote?

A. No. COPE-TIGER does not tell union members how to vote. We provide members with materials on the candidates, along with their voting records and other information to help them make informed, responsible choices.

Q. How does COPE select the candidates we support?

A. Members like you with an interest in politics become active members in the COPE Committee.

This interest can lead to the selection of candidates through membership on the Screening Committee. We screen candidates on their positions regarding education issues, their leadership and/or committee positions, and the ability of the challenger to be a viable candidate and then recommend endorsements. All candidates for offices affecting education, regardless of political party, are invited to participate in the process that includes questionnaires and interviews. Incumbents have their voting records on educational issues tracked as well. The BTU has endorsed and then worked to elect many of education's strongest allies.

Q. I am a Republican. Why should I support my local's endorsed candidates when so many of the candidates are Democrats?

A. COPE-TIGER is nonpartisan and intends to remain nonpartisan. Political party affiliation is not a consideration in endorsements. Voting records on education, leadership and committee positions and the ability of the challenger to be a viable candidate are the determinants for selection.

Q. Doesn't the Union receive enough funds from member dues to pay for its government relations program?

A. Member dues are never used to pay for the union's government relations program. Membership in COPE-TIGER is voluntary and contributions are used exclusively to fund committee activities.

Q. How does the Union keep up to date with local, state, and national legislation, politicians, and grass-roots efforts?

A. The Union has a number of resources such as a Political Organizer, affiliates web pages, participation in the Central Labor Council and member activists.

Q. How can I become a member of COPE-TIGER?

A. Simply sign the COPE payroll deduction card.

\$1 each month will automatically be deducted by the Payroll Department.



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Communications



Publications

The primary focus of BTU Communications is to work on behalf of the membership by providing accurate and up-to-date information to all officers, staff, stewards, members and the news media. The department does this through its publications, via social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter member alerts and via the BTU website.

E-Mails

In order to give stewards and members the most up-to-the-minute information, the Communications Department sends a series of regular e-mails to stewards and members via the district's e-mail system. We also conduct member surveys, which are vital to understanding the needs and wishes of all members. Please refer to the chart below for an explanation of the regular BTU e-mails, when they are published and the types of content to expect.

Publication	Date	Content	Recipients
Empower!	Second Monday of the month	Updates on current issues, member surveys, upcoming events	All members
Steward Update	First Thursday of the month	Related to Empower, but more in depth and ahead of time, so stewards are prepared to inform and answer questions	All stewards
FYI	As needed	News that requires immediate member attention or action	Based on content



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Financial Reports



2017-2018 Union Financial Information

Our members must have absolute confidence that their money is being used wisely. That is why BTU has conducted a thorough review of the local's finances and implemented a clear and transparent budgeting system, best financial practices, and a strong system of checks and balances. We continue to work every day to restore financial integrity to our union.

Our union has significantly increased its financial transparency by providing financial information to members, stewards, and executive board members. We engage with an independent certified public accounting firm on an annual basis to examine and account for all union financial transactions. Our union is providing extensive training to officers and members on how to read and interpret financial documents.

BTU Accountant Jennifer Reeves, CPA, serves as a resource to the Budget Committee and the executive board. The Budget Committee meets monthly to review budget line items and make the necessary budget recommendations to the executive board. Recommendations of the Budget Committee are not adopted in the budget until they are approved by a vote of the executive board. All expenses incurred by the union, with limited exceptions for small expenses, must be included in the approved budget. Executive board members receive union financial statements on a monthly basis, and financial statements are prepared and discussed at every steward council meeting.

CURRENT DUES

Total EP/TSP/CSP Dues: \$39.04 per paycheck – 20 deductions	Total ESP Dues: \$19.77 per paycheck – 20 deductions
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Dues Talking Points



A. Where your dues dollars go:

- Contract negotiation and implementation.
- Professional staff and legal services to defend member rights.
- Day - to - day expenses required in maintaining the union office and staff.
- Printing and mailing costs of for members.
- Membership updates and other union publications.
- Lobbying for education legislation. – COPE
- Representation of education professionals in the organization.
- Expenses to conventions, meetings, etc.
- State, National Affiliate Organizations and the AFL-CIO.
- Occupational liability insurance (\$1,000,000).

B. Where your union dues do NOT go:

- Union dues do **not** go toward the support of political candidates. Our political action money comes from **voluntary** contributions donated for such action. The union negotiated payroll deduction provisions for political action funds and *maintains a separate account*

C. The democratic structure of the union:

- Regular election of officers.
- Governing documents: bylaws and constitution.
- Membership meetings open to all members.
- Elected bodies (Executive Board and Steward Council) vote on all pertinent issues including membership dues issues.
- The organization abides by all national, state and local statutes regarding union affairs.

D. Financial checks and balances:

- The union maintains checks and balances in dealing with its finances.
- All financial documents produced by the union's independent and certified public accounting firm are available for review by members at the union's offices.
- The union provides financial reports to all stewards on a regular basis.
- Regular financial audits by an outside, independent auditor.



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Affiliates



The Florida Education Association

The Florida Education Association (FEA) represents 140,000 members who work in Florida's public schools, colleges and universities. The membership consists of teachers, bus drivers, faculty members, school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, educational aides, librarians, painters, media technicians and bus mechanics. The association's members work with Florida's public school children and college students in their pursuit of quality education.

Benefits provided:

- Legal Defense Fund
- Local, state and national
- Legislative agendas
- Professional development
- 140,000 members strong



American Federation of Teachers

American Federation of Teachers (AFT), works to improve the lives of our more than one million members and their families, to give voice to their legitimate professional, economic and social aspirations, to strengthen the institutions in which we work, to improve the quality of the services we provide, to bring together all members to assist and support one another and to promote democracy, human rights and freedom in our union, in our nation and throughout the world.

Benefits provided:

- Education research and dissemination
- Legal Defense Fund
- Leadership training
- Civil and human rights causes
- Professional issues



National Education Association

The National Education Association (NEA) is America's oldest and largest organization committed to advancing the cause of public education. Founded in 1857 in Philadelphia and now headquartered in Washington, D.C., NEA proudly claims more than 3.2 million members who work at every level of education, from pre-school to university graduate programs. NEA has affiliates in every state as well as in over 13,000 local communities across the United States.

Benefits provided:

- Professional Issues Watch
- Community development
- National Teacher Standards Board
- Legal Defense Fund
- Liability insurance
- Advocates for school reform



AFL-CIO

The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) is a voluntary federation of 66 national and international labor unions. The unions represent 13 million working women and men of every race and ethnicity and from every walk of life. We are teachers and teamsters, musicians and miners, firefighters and farm workers, bakers and bottlers, engineers and editors, pilots and public employees, doctors and nurses, painters and laborers - and more.

Benefits provided:

- Social and economic justice
- Local, state and national
- Legislative agendas
- Political office screenings
- Advocates for working families

A comprehensive listing of benefits provided by our affiliates is published on btuonline.com so members can access them anywhere they have Internet access.