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TO: State Affiliate Presidents
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NEA Center for Organizing Staff and NEA Department Directors

FROM: Jim Testerman, Senior Director, Center for Organizing

DATE: April 30, 2018

RE: Center for Organizing April 2018 Report

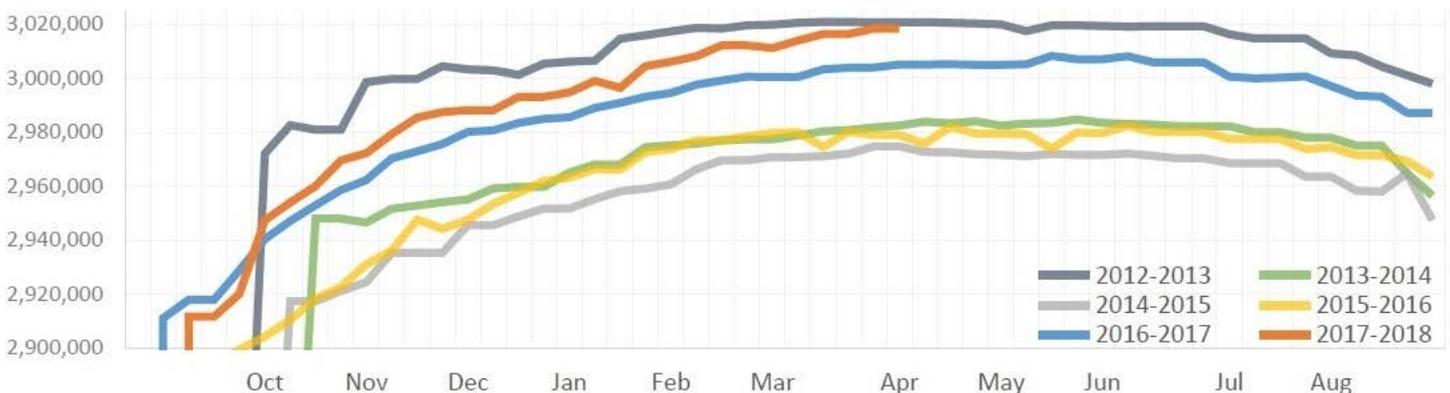
The NEA Center for Organizing (C4O) partners with Affiliates and Locals in organizing campaigns designed to develop best practices in member recruitment, member engagement, leadership development, and successful advocacy on the issues important to our members and our mission. These monthly reports provide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

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Overall net membership has continued to grow every month during the 2017-2018 fiscal year, with total membership currently up to 3,018,348. Thirty-one state affiliate showed net growth, with California, Florida, New York, Minnesota, and Washington leading the way, all with more than 2,000 net new members each. Affiliates can continue this positive growth trend by taking advantage of the [Early Enrollment campaign](#) during the spring recruitment period. Local associations are [encouraged to sign-up](#) to have an NEA-C4O Organizational Specialist contact them to tailor a recruitment campaign to their specific needs.



Weekly Membership by Year — Δ This Week, PY



ENGAGEMENT ORGANIZING:

The NEA-C4O Growth, Leadership, and Union Engagement (GLUE) Team facilitated an organizing workshop at the 2018 NEA Leadership Summit. Seventy leaders from around the country gathered to share union history, learn about threats to organized labor, and talk about how the attacks relate to power within the formation of organizing movements. Members presented on how they will take the learnings from the session back to their locals to strengthen organizing blitzes, raising awareness about what's at stake, advocating for educators in their communities and sharing information about hard-won contract benefits with their membership—and their need to protect their rights.



CALIFORNIA: Hundreds of teachers at California's largest virtual charter school—California Virtual Academies (CAVA)—[won a landmark union contract](#) from K12 Inc., securing a hefty pay raise and due process rights from the Virginia-based education giant. Many NEA staff demonstrated against their anti-union stances while K12 Inc. held board meetings in downtown Washington, DC. The new contract agreement will avoid the need for educators with K12 Inc. to go on strike, which they were fully prepared for and intended to do.

IOWA: A coalition including the Burlington Education Association (BEA), Teamsters, AFSCME, and community members organized through Iowans for Public Education, has been packing school board meetings for months, focusing attention on the issue of collective bargaining. Local and state union leaders have spoken at these meetings, but most importantly, general members, parents, and community leaders have also lent their support. Topics they have stood behind include the importance of negotiating permissive items and also having permissive items returned to their respective master agreements. This comes after the school district first chose to strip all permissive language from the BEA Master Agreement, after changes had been made to Iowa's Collective Bargaining Law. Most recently, the school board has tried to use these same tactics against bargaining units for AFSCME and Teamsters, and has refused community requests to have a specific open forum to discuss the importance of strong and respectful Master Agreements for employees in the community of Burlington. Despite the refusal to hold a work session, the coalition has organized around regularly-scheduled school board meetings, and will continue to do so until their voices are heard.

MAINE: Leaders and members with the Tri-Town Education Association have made their presence known at a series of school board budget work sessions. Dissatisfied with the board's failure to invest available funds in students and schools in recent years, members are taking a stand in support of increases to per-pupil expenditures of no less than five percent. So far, their resolve is paying off: a proposal by the local superintendent to increase investment by more than five percent for class-size reduction and student safety improvements is on track for board approval. Through this process, a pro-public education candidate has emerged to run for a board position in May.

WASHINGTON: The Seattle Education Association (SEA) is using technology in creative ways to assist their bargaining efforts. By creating a cadre of "Building Bargaining Leaders" who work alongside Association Representatives to drive input, attend bargaining updates and increase turnout for public bargaining sessions. SEA has also begun to use [Global Connect](#) with Google Docs to conduct simultaneous bargaining input meetings at 90 worksites. This online connectivity has allowed more than 1,000 SEA members to participate in unison, sharing their input about worksite problems, stories and common interests, and potential options for addressing these concerns. SEA Executive Director, John Donaghy, commented that "using this system is way deeper than a bargaining survey, way broader than focus groups or regional meetings...and gives us a picture of our organizational strength and structure based on where we pulled off the meeting and how many members participated at each site."

UTAH: The Utah School Employees Association (USEA) was well represented at the recent NEA ESP Conference in Orlando. Six of the eight USEA representatives were first-time attendees of the

conference. USEA also presented a workshop discussing the challenges of moving locals from a servicing model to an organizing model. The presenters included the President and Vice-President of the Weber Support Professionals Association, a USEA staff person and an NEA staff person to convey the challenges they each faced at every level of the association.

OREGON: The Oregon Education Association (OEA) has embarked on a project to conduct one-on-one conversations with at least 75% of its members to learn the passions that keep our members engaged in education and some of the challenges that get in the way of providing the best learning environment for their students. OEA has already identified hundreds of members who are trusted in their worksites to lead this effort. After four months, OEA has conducted 20,000 one-on-one conversations and visited with approximately 45% of its members in 95% of their local associations. OEA expects this in-depth work will prevent and curtail potential losses of membership associated with the loss of agency fee.



INDIANA: The Indianapolis Public Schools Community Coalition (IPSCC), an Indianapolis AROS chapter, organized with several other public education advocacy groups and the Indiana State Teachers Association to plan "Celebrate Public Education" at the Indiana Statehouse. Zoe Bardou, an IPSCC member and high school student, [gave an emphatic speech](#) on how the lottery system and privatization efforts have harmed Indianapolis Public School students. IPSCC members have been busy with several other activities, including school board meetings and canvassing district voters to join their growing collective.

FLORIDA: Florida educators are threatened by the soon to be law, HB7055, which requires every local association to have 50% membership density or greater. In response, the Florida Education Association (FEA) is implementing a statewide membership growth plan, focusing on locals that are below the 50% threshold. The Escambia Education Association (49.7% density) and Escambia-ESP (43% density) kicked off the program with 9 members gathered for one and a half days of training to learn their roles, practice one-on-one conversation skills, build their teams, obtain practical field-based experience, and connect to their state and national unions. The training was facilitated in partnership with FEA, AFT, and NEA staff. Members from the Escambia Education Association and Escambia-ESP will devote 10 hours per week through June toward growing their unions.



NEW JERSEY: The Paterson Education Association's (PEA) won their "Strong, United, And Ready To Fight" contract campaign. After two years of campaign build-up, and more than one year at the negotiations table, PEA settled on an agreement that provides affordable healthcare and salary increases at or above state and county averages. This campaign is historic as it is the first time in decades that PEA has settled in mediation, without having to go to fact-finding. It is also noteworthy that the campaign was predominately driven by rank-and-file members. PEA continues to

lead the fight for safe schools and recently took their demands to the state legislature, testifying on the need for the [School Temperature Control Bill](#).

The Jersey City Education Association (JCEA) executed a successful one day strike, demanding affordable healthcare and a living wage, taking a stand for themselves, their students, and all of New Jersey. Local leaders identified and recruited strike captains at each site and tested their communications structure, which helped members at all JCEA worksites to demonstrate for months. Through this data-driven campaign, with tests for



organizational capacity along the way, an overwhelming majority of the membership voted to go on strike. Thousands of members, students, parents and other members of the community engaged in this contract fight; a joint effort between JCEA, affiliate staff of the New Jersey Education Association and NEA.

EARLY CAREER EDUCATORS:

NEA-C4O continues to partner with NEA's Center for Great Public Schools on the Aspiring Educator and Early Career Educator webinar series. The final webinar, "Maximizing Your Summer Break and Preparing for Your First Five Days in the Classroom," will be held June 11th at 7pm EST. [Use this link](#) to register for the webinar and receive additional early career and aspiring educator resources.

The Alumni Ambassador program connects classroom educators with upcoming graduates who are expected to join the education profession soon. If you are interesting in assisting a new educator with navigating the various challenges of being in the classroom for the first time, [please volunteer here online](#).

OHIO: The Ohio Education Association's (OEA) early career educator group, ONE (Ohio's New Educators), is working to build connections to Aspiring Educators by participating in the Career Fair Organizing program. Members of ONE attended Career Fairs at Miami University, Bowling Green State University and a Southwest Ohio regional event hosted by University of Cincinnati and Xavier University. To date, they've had 93 one-on-one conversations and, with two more remaining events scheduled, plan to target more than 1/3 of graduates with undergraduate education degrees in Ohio.

HIGHER ED:

NEA convened 271 participants at the 2018 Higher Education Conference in Chicago. Washington Education Association Higher Ed Organizer, Gary McNeil, led "Organizing Lessons of the Haymarket," commemorating the victims of a bomb strike that occurred during a labor strike demonstration. The session was very poignant as it was conducted on the actual site of the bombing, allowing participants to better connect with labor history. To sharpen their organizing skills, 27 state and local affiliate staff with Higher Ed assignments from 16 states also participated in a training session prior to the Higher Education Conference.

FLORIDA: The United Faculty of Florida (UFF) has been highly active in organizing college and university staff with the Florida Education Association (FEA).

- UFF's University of Florida chapter led 45 members and leaders in work planning groups concerning new hires, department outreach, communication and non-tenure track faculty.
- The University of Central Florida (UCF) won equity raises resulting from their most recent labor contract. This brings faculty salaries to a base of \$42,000 to \$60,000 based on the degree and contract length.
- UFF-UCF President Scott Launier co-produced a documentary, "[Let my People Vote](#)," an exploration of voter suppression in Florida and the voter rights restoration movement. The documentary aims to gain support for Amendment 4, a Florida ballot initiative that would give ex-felons the right to vote.
- UFF successfully organized a scratch campaign with at Pasco-Hernando State College to [form a new Higher Ed unit](#). After all votes were cast, Associate Professor Caitlin Gille commented that "we can now participate more effectively in shaping the policies that affect our work of facilitating student success. I anticipate many positive changes now that our faculty can collectively bargain."

MY SCHOOLS/MY VOICE (THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT):

ARKANSAS: The Little Rock Education Association (LREA) has begun to engage members to include their voice and expertise into their district’s ESSA plan. Over 4 days, LREA staff visited 26 worksites to engage educators with their MSMV campaign, focusing on using the [ESSA Opportunity Checklist](#) as a recruitment tool. Their efforts led to 341 one-on-one conversations, 266 checklist responses, 41 new members and 14 potential new leaders. Many local district issues were conveyed to LREA staff and leaders, which LREA plans to follow up on to increase equity within their district.

The Camden Fairview Education Association (CREA) signed three new members and two new Association Representatives at the onset of their My Schools/My Voice campaign. CREA President Jamie Johnson and their UD, Dr. Carolyn Jones, followed with a [town hall training on the Opportunity Checklist](#) for ARs and other interested staff, members, and community stakeholders. Since the town hall, both ESPs and classroom educators have been involved in strategy sessions to determine next steps, which are already yielding results, with more than 40 people having completed the ESSA Opportunity Checklist.

MASSACHUSETTS: The Educational Association of Worcester (EAW) organized an AROS meeting to bring together educators, parents, students and community members to organize for education justice. Thirty people attended this first meeting, including students, parents, EAW members, a school board member and the Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance (MEJA) Statewide Director. The group focused on high stakes testing and the need to decrease the use of these tests in order to create more time to learn. This led to the development of a survey regarding the over-use of testing, which they plan to distribute to worksites across the district. EAW plans to coordinate their testing campaign with statewide efforts led by the Massachusetts Teachers’ Association (MTA).



Fifty educators with the Springfield Education Association Educators of Color Network spoke out at a Springfield, MA School Board Committee meeting, criticizing the district’s hiring and promotion practices. As one educator noted, 80% of the students in Springfield schools are students of color while only 15% of the educators are minorities. Educators and their social justice allies called attention to the actions the district is not taking and the community is now holding the administration more accountable.

NEW MEXICO: NEA-Las Cruces held the first of three regional My School/My Voice cohort trainings, joined by neighboring locals NEA-Deming and NEA-Alamogordo with representatives from the Classified School Employees Council of Las Cruces. Each participating local collaboratively developed specific plans on how to utilize the My School My Voice Checklist in their respective districts to organize comprehensive strategic local campaigns. The president of NEA-Alamogordo, Melanie Hallbeck stated, “all the information was very helpful and I’m most excited to start using the school checklist to increase our strength and our ability to change policy and practices.” NEA-Deming co-president Charity Cheung said, “today’s training has me excited to use this opportunity to identify and recruit association representatives during school visits.” NEA-LC local leader Mary Montoya said, “I loved the partnership developing for community schools.”



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.