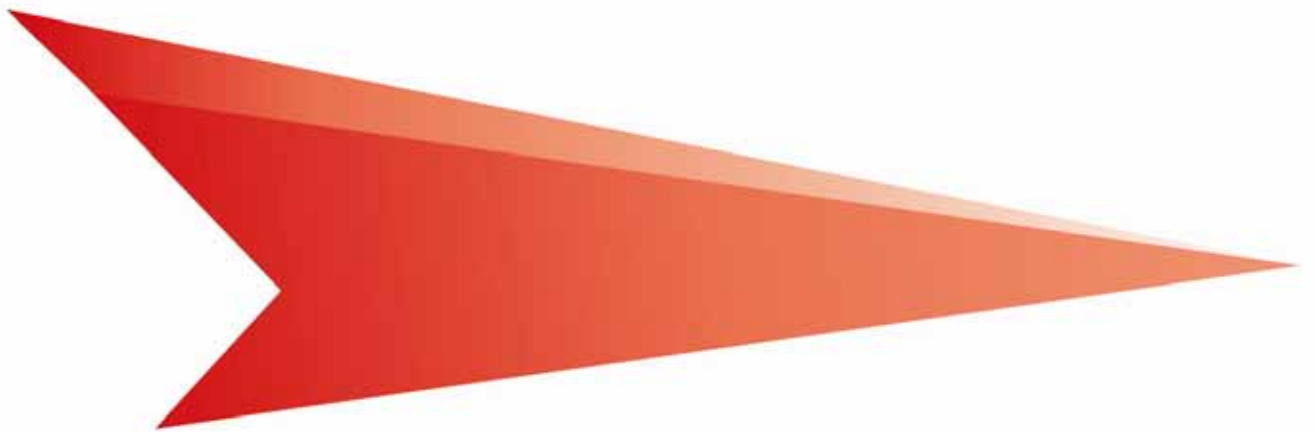


Taking the Lead

Leadership Best Practices



OEA

Oklahoma Education Association

Great public schools for every child.

Taking the Lead • Leadership Best Practices

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Taking the Lead for You:



- ★ OEA is leading the way with SQ 744 to increase the per pupil expenditure to regional average
- ★ OEA fought for National Board stipends in 2010 amid budget shortfalls
OEA rallies teachers to become involved with ESEA reauthorization and Senator Harkins *Keep Our Educators Working Act*
- ★ OEA was responsible for attaining another \$3,000 pay raise for certified teachers and 50 cents per hour pay raise for support personnel in 2006
- ★ OEA won fully-paid individual health insurance in 2004
- ★ In 2004, OEA won vastly improved retirement benefits for teachers hired since 1992
- ★ OEA and Governor Brad Henry and Senate Leaders are responsible for legislation in 2004 which will bring Oklahoma's average teacher salary to the regional average within 5 years
- ★ OEA organized the largest rally at the State Capitol (over 25,000) in 1999, winning a \$3,000 salary increase for teachers from a governor and Legislature, both of which had opposed it



You Are a Leader

In this section you will find information on the following topics:

- Leadership
- Leadership Self-Assessment Survey
- What's the Difference
- Agenda for Local Leadership Training

*PowerPoint on Effective Leadership 101



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Leadership

Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves.

Attributes of Leadership

If you are a leader who can be trusted, then those around you will grow to respect you. To be such a leader, there is a **Leadership Framework** to guide you:

BE. KNOW. DO.

BE a professional. Examples: Be loyal to the organization, perform selfless service, and take personal responsibility.

BE a professional who possess good character traits. Examples: Honesty, competence, candor, commitment, integrity, courage, straightforwardness, imagination.

KNOW the four factors of leadership — follower, leader, communication, situation.

KNOW yourself. Examples: strengths and weakness of your character, knowledge, and skills.

KNOW human nature. Examples: Human needs, emotions, and how people respond to stress.

KNOW your job. Examples: be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks.

KNOW your organization. Examples: where to go for help, its climate and culture, who the unofficial leaders are.

DO provide direction. Examples: goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning.

DO implement. Examples: communicating, coordinating, supervising, evaluating.

DO motivate. Examples: develop morale and *esprit de corps* in the organization, train, coach, counsel.

Leadership Self-Assessment Activity

This survey is designed to provide you with feedback about your level of preference or comfort with leadership characteristics and skills.

If you have NOT performed a task before, estimate how difficult the task would be for you to learn to perform.

Circle the number on the scale that you believe comes closest to your skill or task level. Be honest about your choices as there are no right or wrong answers - it is only for your own self-assessment.

		Very Strong	Moderately Strong	Adequate	Moderately Weak	Very Weak
1.	I enjoy communicating with others.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I am honest and fair.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	I make decisions with input from others.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	My actions are consistent.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	I give others the information they need to do their jobs.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I keep focused through follow-up.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	I listen to feedback and ask questions.	5	4	3	2	1
8.	I show loyalty to the company and to the team members.	5	4	3	2	1
9.	I create an atmosphere of growth.	5	4	3	2	1
10.	I have wide visibility.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	I give praise and recognition.	5	4	3	2	1
12.	I criticize constructively and address problems.	5	4	3	2	1

13.	I develop plans and follow them.	5	4	3	2	1
14.	I have a vision on where we are going and set long term goals.	5	4	3	2	1
15.	I display tolerance and flexibility.	5	4	3	2	1
16.	I can be assertive when needed.	5	4	3	2	1
17.	I am a Champion of change.	5	4	3	2	1
18.	I treat others with respect and dignity.	5	4	3	2	1
19.	I make myself available and accessible.	5	4	3	2	1
20.	I accept ownership for team decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	I developed a budget.	5	4	3	2	1
22.	I can respond to an employee who is upset with me or someone else in the organization.	5	4	3	2	1
23.	I can make a presentation to a group of peers.	5	4	3	2	1
24.	I write reports to be distributed to a group of peers.	5	4	3	2	1
25.	I have a deep-rooted understanding of the functions of my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
26.	I am curious.	5	4	3	2	1
27.	I know how to sell.	5	4	3	2	1
28.	I am a good learner.	5	4	3	2	1
29.	I know how to influence people and get support.	5	4	3	2	1
30.	I admit my mistakes and take responsibility for my actions.	5	4	3	2	1

31.	I like to talk to people and I am a great listener.	5	4	3	2	1
32.	I am a good delegator.	5	4	3	2	1
33.	I can separate the important issues from inconsequential ones.	5	4	3	2	1
34.	I have integrity and can be trusted.	5	4	3	2	1
35.	I am political only when needed.	5	4	3	2	1
	TOTAL					

Total score for all 5 columns: _____ Final Score

Scoring Your Assessment

Total each of the five columns and then add the five columns together for your final score. The maximum score is 250 while the minimum score is 50.

As mentioned earlier, there are no right or wrong answers. This means there are no right or wrong scores. This survey is designed to show you the areas you need to improve in. Your lowest scoring answers are the areas you need to improve. See your supervisor or training department for resources to help you to become more proficient in your weak areas.

Use the table below for a general guideline of where you stand.

- 90 and above - You are well on your way to becoming a leader.
- 50 to 89 - You are getting close.
- 49 and below - Don't Give up! Many before you have continued with their studies to become some of the finest leaders around.

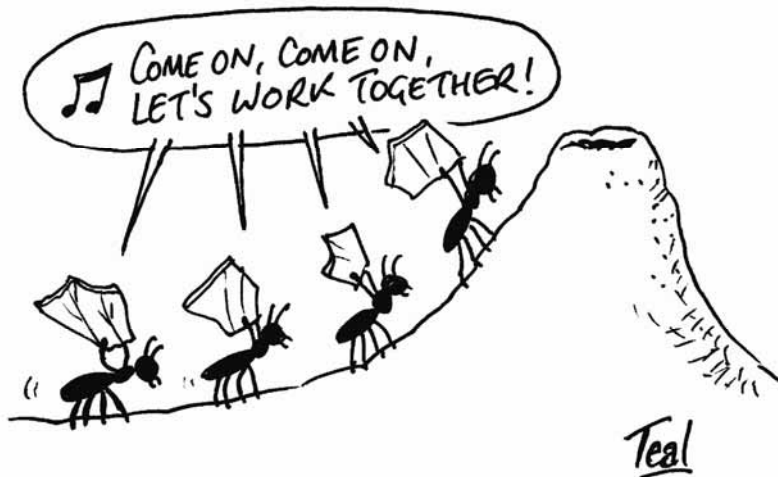
Use this assessment to help you to determine what skills and abilities you can continue to improve (Strengths) and what skills and abilities you need to develop (Opportunities for growth).
What are your strengths?

What are your opportunities for growth?

You Are a Team Builder

(The Role of the Building Representative)

- Organizing your team
- Organizing the faculty
- Local association structure
- Officers and responsibilities
- Ways to welcome new teachers



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Organizing Your Team

A team is more than one person. As a team manager, you will delegate responsibility by building an efficient and reliable network of association members to perform the assigned duties.

One person may be assigned to hand out materials. Another may volunteer to keep the bulletin board updated. Others may help in other ways as needed. Let's start by looking at the general duties of the Building Representative (BR) and then you'll have a better idea of what you want to delegate.

The Building Representative is the elected or appointed spokesperson, the leader of the association at the building level or unit level. The role of the Building Representative and how well this responsibility is fulfilled is directly related to the program success of the local association.

The Building Rep as a **policy maker:**

1. Attend and take an active part in all BR meetings as well as other general membership meetings.
2. Be responsible for communicating on behalf of your building at the BR meetings and bringing information back from those meetings to your building.
3. Be a staunch supporter of the decision once policy has been established.
4. Be an enthusiastic supporter of all association activities.
5. Represent the wishes of your building in voting upon policy.

The Building Rep as **spokesperson for the profession:**

1. Be informed in order to talk about the education profession.
2. Volunteer to represent the association in various situations.
3. Work with parent organizations in your school as a representative of the association.
4. Be a good public relations person in your building.

The Building Rep as a **communicator:**

1. See that all materials and information are distributed, posted or otherwise made available to the members.
2. Maintain a file of materials, which is easily accessible to the members.
3. Convey requests and concerns of your building members to the local president, Association building rep council or other association governance body.
4. Design and maintain an association bulletin board accessible to all members in the building.

The Building Rep as **coordinator:**

1. Let every educational employee know about the work of the association.
2. Plan and conduct building meetings before or after association meetings, **OR** design a method of conveying needed information to the members of your building.

The Building Rep as a **membership recruiter:**

1. Enroll newly employed individuals in the association.
2. Maintain accurate membership records.
3. Report membership difficulties to the local president or membership chair.

You may want to have a social chair as well as a political action chair in each building.

It is more productive and more fun to have a “team” of Building Representatives. Ask for help! Let others get involved at the level they are comfortable with. Involve new members of the faculty. Keep each other up to date and remember to **CELEBRATE** your Association, your membership and success.

Organizing the Faculty

Building Representatives and leaders are not there simply to stuff mailboxes or handout membership forms. The success of the Association – at both the state and local levels – is highly dependent on the support the Association receives from the “rank and file” members. Building teams should be established to serve both the rank and file and provide a communications link from the members to the leaders. In creating campus teams, consider how your

campus is structured. Is it by grade levels? Subject areas? Vertical teams? The following suggestions can give ideas on creating teams in your building.

The least you need to know: To get more people involved, ask your members for help. Divide the faculty into small groups. Get together often with your team members to ensure that everyone is knowledgeable about all facets of the Association.

Model number 1

Building Representative: _____
Delegate to the Representative Council:

Grade K: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	Grade 1: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Grade 2: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	Grade 3: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Grade 4: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	Grade 5: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Model number 2

Building Representative: _____
Delegate to the Representative Council:

Science: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	English: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Math: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	Social Studies: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Fine Arts: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	P.E./Health: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Vocational: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____	Other: BR: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Local Association Committee Structure



"Here's the new organizational chart...Hunter can eat Spanky or Fido, Spanky can eat Spot or Duke, Duke can eat Corky or Precious and Rollo can eat any of you..."

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Committees

Executive Committee:

- Develop Association goals
- Establish Association programs - committees
- Develop budget
- Monitor programs and activities
- Evaluate programs

Committee Members:

President

- Chair executive committee
- Call and hold meetings
- Develop meeting agenda
- Appoint committee chairs
- Develop leadership potential
- OEA contact

Vice President

- Support president
- President-in-training
- Acting president, en absentia

Secretary

- Take and transcribe minutes of meetings
- Notify members of meetings
- Distribute minutes to committees

Treasurer

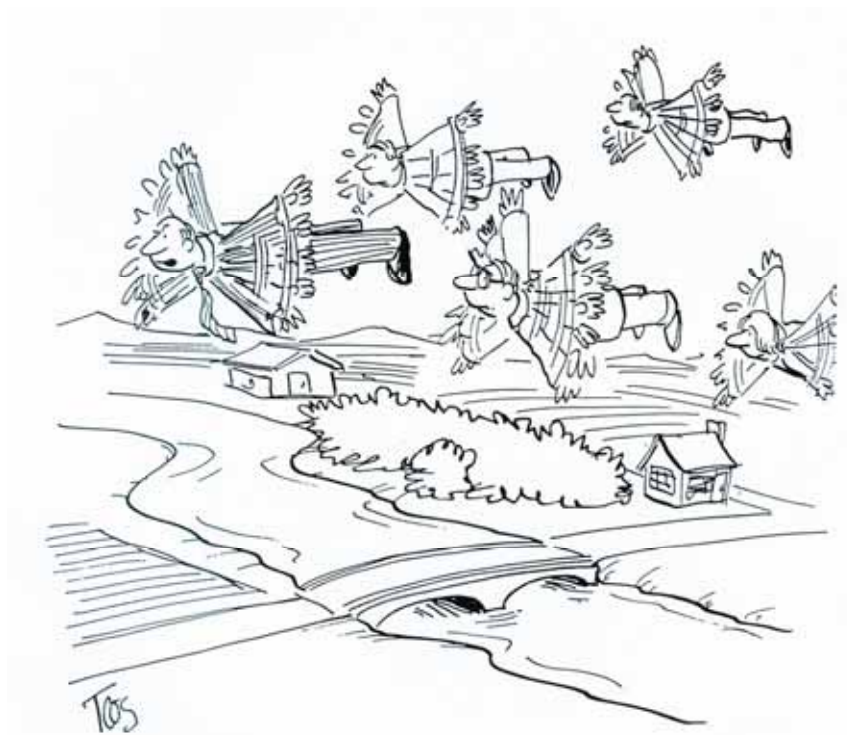
- Monitor and report budget to executive committee
- Balance accounts monthly
- Maintain checking account

Standing Committees:

Membership Committee:	Plan details of membership strategy Implement membership campaign Monitor membership Recruit recruiters Provide training for recruiters Report to executive committee
Communications Committee:	Develop newsletter Promote Association Recognize members Write letters to the editor Generate earned media
Bargaining Committee:	Support bargaining team Conduct crisis planning Conduct research
Grievance Committee:	Enforce contract with district Solve problems at lowest level
Legislative Committee:	Inform members of legislation Call members to action Promote OEA legislative update Lobby legislators locally and at capitol Involve members in campaign activities Plan local school board election activities
Professional Development Committee:	Seek member input into professional development needs Survey membership Advocate association position in (re: Professional Development needs) Report to executive committee
Elections Committee:	Ad hoc committee – convened as needed Conducts elections at the local level Conducts elections for OEA/NEA races

Officers and Responsibilities

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Local Executive Committee Members
- Local Association Building Reps



"This will give you an overview of our branch offices."

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Officers and Responsibilities

A vigorous local association can build pride in the profession. It can cause employees to unite in their efforts to achieve objectives for themselves and education. It can generate faith in the education employee profession and develop public confidence in the schools.

The president and executive committee are the key persons in the planning and promotion of the local program, but they do not work alone. Major accomplishments come when the responsibilities are shared with the members. In the final analysis, the program of the local association depends significantly upon the leadership offered by the officer – upon the knowledge, attitude and understanding that they bring to the job – and upon the opportunities they create for employees to work and plan together. Local leaders should determine which member needs the association will strive to achieve, how they will measure and report progress toward their selected aims, who will do the work, and when it will be done.

The following pages are designed to assist officers by outlining the duties and responsibilities of the offices they hold.

By realizing, assuming, and actualizing these responsibilities, leaders can foster successful efforts toward local association goals.

Duties of the President –

To keep the Association on the move, a local president should . . .

- Obtain and study copies of the local association constitution and bylaws and any agreements that have been made with the school board or other agencies.
- Obtain from the outgoing president all minutes, correspondence, and other significant papers. Especially look over reports and actions of the last year so that the program is continuous and there are no loose ends.
- Make sure elections of local officers and representatives and state and national delegates are held as mandated in local, state, and national bylaws.
- Organize a workshop for local association leaders to educate them on the programs and policies of the association and their respective responsibilities.
- See that the board of directors or executive committee meets monthly.

- Prepare an agenda in advance for each meeting.
- Check with local secretary before each meeting to make sure that all necessary committee reports, materials, correspondence, and information are on hand.
- Begin and end meetings promptly.
- Follow accepted rules of parliamentary procedure in conducting meetings.
- Require a monthly financial statement.
- Have an audit at the end of your term.
- Make certain that there is a local association calendar and that general membership meetings and executive committee meetings are scheduled throughout the year.
- Require each committee chairperson to present a monthly report to the executive committee and a quarterly report to the general membership.
- Read all OEA and NEA bulletins and inform membership about local, state, and national problems and programs.
- Be aware of significant dates, such as OEA and NEA meetings, regional leadership conferences, presidents' councils, and school board meetings. Plan to attend. See that others attend.
- Make a list of key association officers and committee chairpersons, building representatives, every school, the superintendent, board members, city officials, and key citizens. Include addresses, occupations, and telephone numbers.
- Meet with the executive committee and negotiations team to outline the bargaining process.
- Meet with the superintendent and board president to initiate the bargaining process.
- Attend the OEA Delegate Assembly as a delegate or as a nonvoting member.

Duties of the Vice President –

- To serve as “assistant president” helping and supporting the president with all duties.
- To become familiar with the duties and plans of the president.
- To act as host or hostess at meetings, to check on arrangements, and to greet members and guests as they arrive.
- To encourage members to participate in discussions.
- To be ready at all times to assume the role of the president.
- To attend local school board meetings, work, and study sessions.
- To act as parliamentarian at meetings.
- To serve as ex-officio member of all standing committees.
- To attend all meetings as directed by the president.

Duties of the Treasurer –

- To receive, protect, care for, and disburse all funds of the association as duly authorized to maintain an accurate accounting of same.
- To assist in preparing the budget and dues schedule for the year.
- To submit an annual financial report to the association and to prepare such other reports as may be required.
- To forward state and national dues and membership records to proper authorities.
- To maintain an accurate record of members and payment of dues in local, state, and national associations.
- To file regular reports to the appropriate government agencies for staff members.
- To attend all meetings as directed by the president.

Duties of the Secretary –

To interpret properly the discussions at the local association meetings is probably the secretary's most important function. Failure to record clearly the proceedings of a meeting may confuse the officers and members of the association.

- Give a true interpretation of what goes on in the meeting by getting to the heart of each pertinent discussion.
- Make the minutes the permanent record of association business and activities; keep a permanent minutes book.
- Notify officers, committees, and delegates of appointments.
- Provide the OEA regional office with a list of officers, committees, and delegates.
- Notify all committee members of assignments and times and places of meetings.
- Certify with the local president to the state and national association the names of all persons chosen to serve as delegates from the local association to the annual meetings and to such other meetings as requested.
- Keep a systematic method of filing (a) letters received and copies of letters sent, and (b) records of the association: treasurer's reports; membership roster; up-to-date copy of the constitution and bylaws; a list of all committee members, their addresses and telephone numbers; and copies of all committee and miscellaneous reports.
- Send out notices of regular and special meetings of the association. Notify your OEA Regional Office of meetings.
- Carry out correspondence of the association.

Duties of the Executive Committee Members –

As a local Executive Committee member you are:

- An education employee advocate
- A member of the local representatives council
- To attend all meetings specified in the local association constitution and bylaws
- A representative of all members
- Part of an organization and accountable to members
- To receive and act on member input
- To provide information to members
- To promote membership in the education association
- To know the contents of the negotiated agreement
- To know the local association constitution

Duties of the Local Association (Building) Representatives –

As a local association (building) representative you are:

- An education employee advocate
- A member of the local representative council
- To attend all meetings specified in the local association constitution and bylaws
- To represent all members, as well as a specific segment of members
- Part of an organization and accountable to your members and the executive board
- To receive and act on member input
- To provide information to members
- To hold meetings of the members in your buildings at least once a month
- To assist members in determining effective ways of securing their interests
- To promote membership in the association
- To know the contents of the negotiated agreement
- To know the local Association constitution and bylaws

You are a Communicator

- Design effective communications
- Share information
- Hold a 10 minute meeting
- Use communication to build and sustain your association
- Other communication opportunities



Designing Effective Communications

As an association representative, you listen to and learn about the concerns and interests of your members. **You are the essential information link between your members and your association!** Using association bulletin boards, association meetings, electronic, and other communications, and your state staff, you can keep your members informed and report to your association the issues that are important to your members.

Effective communications are:

- Brief, but attention-getting
- Clearly and simply worded
- Factual
- Edited for clarity, content, and grammatical errors

Brevity: Your members are as busy as you are! Lengthy newsletters and emails are generally ignored, deleted, or thrown away. Determine the top three, five, or 10 facts or ideas you want to communicate to your members and then determine the best design to communicate them effectively. After a one- or two-sentence introduction, use bullet points. If designing a newsletter, break the page into quadrants or rows and limit the amount of text in each quadrant, especially when including photographs. Give the basic facts and then include the name of someone to contact for more information. Use color and attention-grabbing headlines whenever possible, and proudly display your association logo on all communications!

Word choice: Use simple words and clear sentence structure. When using acronyms and association or education-specific words, don't assume everyone will know what they mean...give clear explanation.

Factual: Stick to the facts and avoid "loaded" words that exaggerate what you want to communicate. Verify that what you are communicating is accurate and go to the primary source for verification.

Editing: Use spell and grammar check whenever possible, and ask someone who is a good communicator and writer to read your work for clarity, content, and errors. Then, make necessary changes and ask someone else read it one more time before sending it out.

Sharing Information

As an association representative, you can share local, OEA, and NEA information through:

- Personal contact
- Local association newsletters
- OEA *Education Focus* Magazine
- OEA electronic newsletters
- Membership meetings
- Telephone trees
- U.S. mail
- Email
- Websites
- Social networking sites

Your OEA Communications staff will be happy to assist you with your communication needs. Contact the Oklahoma City OEA Communications office for feature information in the *Education Focus*.

The following are some sources you can use to share with your members as news updates on bulletin boards, newsletter segments, fliers, or subjects of meetings:

- Local news stories relating to education (visit newspaper websites)
- The *Education Focus* (scan for important and timely information) is sent to every member via U.S. mail from the OEA. Make sure you read it to become familiar with issues and to look for local members who may be featured in the magazine.
- *OEA Legislative Updates* are sent during the legislative session via email regarding political issues and legislation which affects our members.
- The *OEA Insider* weekly email blast highlights bulleted features of statewide interest and includes the accomplishments of local associations.
- *NEA Today* is a monthly magazine sent to every member via U.S. mail from the NEA. Issues having statewide impact are often featured; circle the items which feature Oklahoma teachers and post on your Association bulletin boards!
- Check the www.okea.org and www.nea.org websites for a wealth of information on topics ranging from instructional tips to professional development opportunities.
- Follow OEA and NEA on Facebook and Twitter.

Holding a 10 Minute Meeting

Meetings should be called when there is a need for two-way communication between the association representatives and the building members or when the subject is too detailed and too complicated for a single flyer.

Meetings are successful and well attended only if they are SHORT and to the point. One of the best ways of increasing attendance at your meetings is to promise meetings will be no longer than 10 minutes.

Six tips for a successful 10-minute meeting:

- One week before the meeting, send out the first notice to all members or desired attendees, listing the time, place, and topic. If you do not use a standard association meeting notice, be certain to note that the meeting will last no longer than 10 minutes.
- Two days prior to the meeting, place reminder notices in mailboxes (or send via email).
- On the day of the meeting, utilize the campus PA system to call members to the meeting.
- Stick to the agenda. Don't get sidetracked. Building concerns should be heard AFTER the meeting has concluded. Table important issues to another meeting.
- Start and end on time...assign a time keeper.
- NEVER exceed 10 minutes for the "meat" of the meeting, but do allow those who want to stay and ask questions or continue discussion the opportunity to do so.

<p>(Association name)'s Ten Minute Meeting</p> <p>Time:</p> <hr/>
<p>Day:</p> <hr/>
<p>Place:</p> <hr/>
<p>Agenda:</p>

Using Communication to Build and Sustain Membership

Your association exists because of membership, and regular communication can remind both members and nonmembers what your association does on their behalf.

Each building should have an **association bulletin board** in either the teacher's lounge or in a high-traffic area. This board shows that your association takes great pride in membership and wants to share important information to all employees. The board should be clearly labeled with your association name and decorated with background paper and a border. Copies of newsletters, fliers, state and national publications, newspaper articles, cartoons, and posters should be posted and changed regularly. Always include a poster with the names of executive committee members and building reps for each site with room assignments and/or phone numbers!

To plan effective communications, use a calendar and look for communication opportunities throughout the year. For example:

August/September: Publish an annual back-to-school newsletter which gives an overview of negotiations and features the new hires in each building (names, certification areas, teaching assignments); also include the names and teaching assignments of your executive committee and building reps at each site (plus pictures if possible).

Fall: Post fliers regarding professional development opportunities, fall carnivals.

November: For National Education Week, sponsor a luncheon or breakfast for members; place tickets or flyers in mailboxes expressing membership appreciation; place congratulatory flyers on site bulletin boards for members who achieve national board certification.

December: Hold a holiday gift card drawing at each site for members only; publish winner's names and pictures in a newsletter or in an email blast.

February-May: Send out copies of OEA Legislative Updates to members via email; invite your OEA legislative and political organizing UniServ specialist to discuss the legislative session with your members and advertise with flyers.

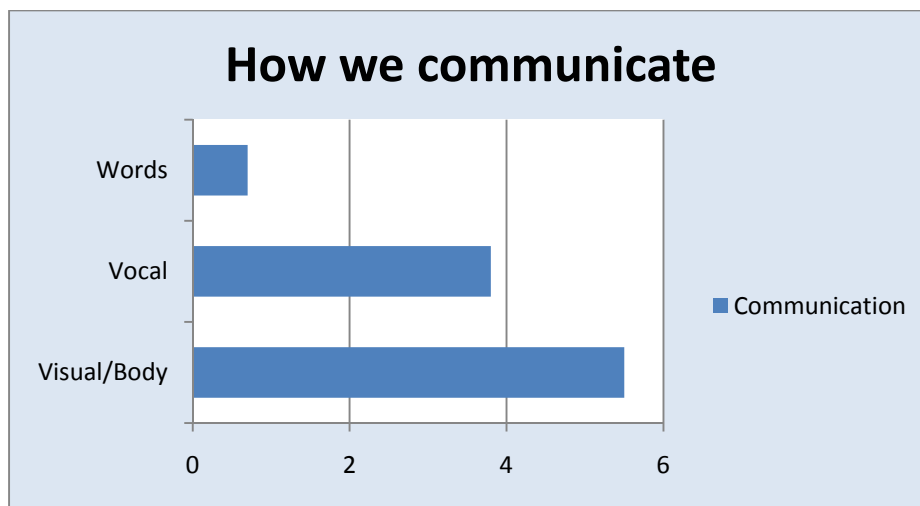
April: Conduct a negotiations survey with your members via copied surveys or utilize an online survey site; send out executive committee vacancies and voting instructions via email.

May: Publish the annual end-of-school newsletter featuring retiring members (include names, years of service and teaching assignments, favorite "ah-ha" moment, favorite tear jerker, favorite funny teaching story); publish negotiations survey results and negotiations committee member names.

Other Communication Opportunities

- Letters to the editor from members about important local, state, and national legislation and educational issues
- Press releases about association events
- Visits from legislators with newspaper coverage
- Trainings by state staff—professional development, legislative updates, advocacy/bargaining/evaluations/due process
- School board candidates' interview transcripts

Lastly...while the copy machine, email, and the Internet make communication easier and faster, **personal contact is still important!** Consider this:



- 55% of our communication is visual and kinesthetic; we process and produce communication 55% of the time visually and using body language.
- 38% of our communication is vocal, meaning that our tone and inflection help communicate our message
- 7% of our communication is the actual words we choose to use.

Face-to-face contact, at least part of the time, is imperative!

You Are A Recruiter

- Planning your building campaign
- Tips for successful membership recruitment
- Welcome new hires to gain new members
- Objections & responses to joining
- Key message points



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You and the building team are in a unique position: You have daily contact with and access to both members and potential members in your building.

You have the opportunity to make members and potential members aware of the benefits and services that come with association membership at all levels – local, state, and national.

You are in the right place to perform your most important job – promoting membership.

But how do you go about doing that job well? This section offers tips that are designed to help you reach and convince your co-workers of the value of Association membership.

Planning Your Building Campaign

Detailed planning and sticking to the plan are the “basics” of your campaign. Build yourself a calendar. Write down every activity related to your local association and your own building membership campaign on the appropriate date. Refer to your calendar often to make sure you will be ready for the next event. OEA recommends that each BR writes his or her own “welcome back” letter or note to give to every employee on the first day of school. Write a special note to the new teachers in your building offering to help in some meaningful way. Email, text messages, or Facebook work well for new members.

Who do you ask?

Your first task as a membership recruiter is to review your site roster and determine who is a member and who is a nonmember. Take the list of nonmembers and divide them into two broad categories:

- Those who are new to your campus
- Those who are not new but still have not joined

Who will do the asking?

Now that you have determined who needs to be asked to join, you must consider some simple questions:

- How many prospective members are there?
- Will you need help in signing them all up?
- Who can and will help you?
 - Department/grade level partners?
 - Persons with similar interest?
 - Persons with similar personalities?
- Who is the best person to recruit each member?

Prepare yourself

You want to go up to a prospective member prepared. The first thing you must do is determine what your “opener” is going to be. Take into consideration the following:

- What is the prospective member interested in?
 - Lobbying?
 - Professional development?
 - Savings?
 - What has your local achieved recently?
 - What are the current state and local issues?
 - What materials and resources will you use in approaching this person?
 - Local newsletter
 - State membership materials
 - *Education Focus*
 - New Teacher Handbook
 - OEA Insider and Legislative Update
 - *NEA Today*
 - Other local resources
 - OEA and NEA websites
 - Facebook, Tumblr, and Twitter
-

13 Tips for Successful Membership Recruitment

1. **Be passionate.**

More people will belong to the association because we are interested in them rather than for all the facts we may know about the organization. Personal connection is the key.

2. **Be engaging.**

Remember, people join for their reasons, not ours. The best invitation to membership is an enthusiastic member. Let it be known that you are proud of the association. Let people know you believe the association can make a difference.

3. **Be persistent**

Contact the potential member in person, one-on-one, when he or she is alone rather than in a group. You obtain the best results from personal contact. After making personal contact, call the potential members. Then send a letter and printed material (membership brochure), if appropriate.

4. **Be first**

Timing is important. People are most likely to join when a major activity occurs, such as when they are newly hired; they receive help with a problem; they are already “joiners,” they are asked and asked and asked. Most members join at back to school activities.

5. Be available

Take a few minutes and plan your contact. Review the use of open-ended questions and listening skills and ask yourself “How can I personalize and customize my approach?” Remember that your job is to listen, not talk, until you find out all you need to know about the prospective member:

- What does the prospect know about the association?
- What are his or her concerns, questions, needs?
- What, if any, are his or her objections (use the “feel, felt, found” technique)?
- How can our association meet his or her needs?

6. Be a mentor

Pair up association members with new hires in an association mentorship.

7. Be an initiator

Invite prospective members to go to association meetings and/or activities.

8. Be resourceful

Prepare yourself with information about organizational goals, programs, and services. Know where to get additional information should you need it. Talk about the association in terms that would answer the question, “What’s in it for me?” Use what you have learned about the prospective member to personalize and customize your message. Keep in mind that you don’t have to know all the answers. Find out the questions, and get back to him or her within a week. You may also ask a more knowledgeable leader or staff person to follow up on your contact.

9. Be a partner.

If you need assistance or a follow-up contact, decide who the best person is for the task. When possible, select a member who has a positive personal relationship with the potential member. When members know potential members, they are often willing to help the recruiting team.

10. Be realistic

When asked about dues, know what they are and the terms. A sample membership form is included with this section.

11. Be fun to be around.

Show enthusiasm for the association through socializing. Hand-deliver materials with a personal note to prospective members. Invite prospective members to socialize with current members at Association events. Provide the resources from the OEA website (www.okea.org) and the NEA website (www.nea.org). They are good sources of information.

12. Be sure to follow up frequently.

Make sure every new member receives some tangible indicator that the services and benefits of membership have begun to flow to them, such as presenting them with a copy of the *Education Focus*.

13. Be there.

Schedule an onsite visit with OEA staff.

Welcoming new hires to gain new members

One way you can provide leadership is to welcome and inform new hires at your school. Whether the new hire is a transfer from another building, an experienced colleague, or an inexperienced one, he or she needs you, as an association representative, to explain the unwritten rules, customs, and norms of your building. You can help your new colleagues fit in quickly by sharing information with them as quickly as possible.

To begin, think about the unique aspects of your work place and be ready to help in the name of the association (and don't forget a membership form). If there aren't any welcoming customs in your workplace or by your association, start some now. Creating an association new employee manual and a new hire goody bag of supplies is also a great place to start.

Some information to share could be:

- What time do employees arrive at your building in the morning?
- Where do employees hang out in the morning, at lunch, or after school? Invite the new employee to meet you in the morning to be introduced to other association members over coffee.
- What are the lunch time norms? Do employees go through the lunch line first? Can employees order special meals? Are there any really good school lunch meals? Where are places to go out for lunch during non-student days?
- When is Open House or Back to School Night normally held? Has a standard format been adopted? What has happened in the past?
- What have employees done together socially in the past?
- What is the principal's reaction to student discipline referrals? Is there other help?
- What were the school's special events last year? When did they take place?
- What is the standard dress or dress code of school staff? What is appropriate?
- Where do you get paper and other supplies in school or find cheap supplies in town?
- What are the Xerox, laminator, and other machine-use protocols?
- What school forms are used and where are they located? Provide guidance and tips.
- Is there a collective bargaining agreement? If so, review items on workday, evaluations, leave, etc. If there is no agreement, inform the new hire of important school policies regarding these items.

- Is there a district or building “new hire” function? If so, help the new hire get there.
- When is the Association’s first function? Help the new hire get there.
- Put aside some time the first few days to see how the new employees are doing, especially after students arrive. Encourage the new hire, no matter how frustrated or disorganized he or she appears. Give advice if ASKED.
- When the first pay checks arrive, help the newcomer determine if his or her pay is correct.

If there is ever a time an employee needs a professional association, it is when he or she is new to the job and trying to figure out what is expected and what help is available. Association responsibilities include making sure new hires receive assistance whether they are members or not and to make sure they understand the benefits of local, state, and national membership. Your goal is for new hires to become a member, make use of those benefits, and to become active in your local association.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL!

**We hope you make use of these supplies
and our association’s New Employee
Manual.**

Please let us know whatever you need...

**Our association exists to serve our
members!**

Your building rep is: _____

Room: _____

Local Association Name & Logo Here

Objections and Responses to Joining

1. "Costs too much. I can't afford it."
2. "Why should I join? I get it for nothing."
3. "I don't agree with _____ of the Association."
4. "I'd join the local, but not the state or national organizations."
5. "I don't like unions."
6. "We shouldn't be involved in politics."
7. "The Association doesn't do anything for our kids and education."
8. "My spouse belongs; I don't need to."
9. "I don't like Association leaders (present or past)."
10. "We don't need it this year." (in a nonbargaining year)
11. "I'm disgruntled from past union experience(s)."
12. "I don't know how long I'll be working here." (leaving employment or retiring soon)

On the following pages, you will find some answers that have been successfully used in responding to objections. If you would like more responses to objections not spelled out here, please call or e-mail your first contact with the OEA, who is

and can be reached at _____

or _____ . We can do trainings on these very topics for you, executive committees, and building representatives.

Objections and Responses

1. **Costs too much. I can't afford it.**

Quote dues in lowest term – per day, pay period, week, etc.

What can you buy for only \$___ a day?' Equate the daily amount to what that amount would buy: "less than the cost of a Big Mac ... a movie ... a 6-pack of pop or beer ... Cite salary increases over recent years, credit Association lobbying and/or bargaining, and show that dues are a good investment.

2. **Why should I join; I get it for nothing?**

"Our collective resources and energies must be directed at those who oppose public education. This is possible only when a majority determines the direction that the organization is to take."

"As a member, you can take an active part in decision making, vote, hold office and have a voice in a democratic, representative organization."

3. **I don't agree with (fill in the blank) of the Association.**

"Our association is democratic – no member is required to agree with the majority on every issue. Our representative bodies issue the recommendations of the majority. How can you get involved, be informed, find out what is happening, or work for change if you don't join?"

Some positions are distorted by our enemies. Explain the distortions, emotional issues, and tactics used by them.

4. **I'd join the local (local/state), but not the NEA.**

"Our local, along with the state and national is constantly working to protect, promote and strengthen members' rights."

Don't agree. Don't argue.

5. **I don't like unions.**

"What do you think of when you say union? "

Cite professional development; community actions, conferences on professional issues, and other ways in which we support them as professionals.

6. We shouldn't be involved in politics.

“Every decision about every brick, every book and education employee is made by persons elected to public office, appointed, or hired by those persons. We are involved in the political arena. Education is politics. Our only decision is whether or not we will affect the outcome.”

7. The Association doesn't do anything for kids and education.

Share information about local and state activities to promote quality education and to benefit students.

Point our scholarships; community support; contests; workshops; work on professional standards, certificates, retirement; NEA Professional Library and online courses; Read Across America; American Education Week, etc.

8. My spouse belongs, I don't need to.

“You are both important members of the local. We all need participation from both of you – on the job and in the association.”

9. I don't like (past or present) leaders.

“Get involved and help make things better.”

“Give us a chance.”

“They are elected by means of open nominations and secret ballot by majority vote – one person, one vote – proportional representation.”

10. We don't need it this year. (in a nonbargaining year)

“What happens in neighboring districts and states affect us.”

11. Disgruntled from past.

“You are right. Now what can we do?”

“We're working/investing this year so we will be strong next year.”

12. I don't know how long I'll be working here. (leaving employment or retiring soon.)

“The investment will be small.”

“We monitor retirement funds, insurance, etc.”

“Your retirement depends upon salary gains these last years. We need your support to get maximum gains.”

Key Message Points

OEA supports and protects quality public education for all students. Here's how:

We work to boost student achievement by:

- Making class sizes manageable
- Providing access to technology and learning resources
- Making sure our schools are safe
- Lobbying for adequate school funding
- Helping teachers attain appropriate time to plan and protect their time to teach

We work to build parental and community support by:

- Developing media campaigns
- Improving home-to-school communications
- Being a credible source of information to the media
- Advocating on behalf of students and educators

We work to maintain high standards by:

- Maintaining strong teacher licensing requirements
- Supporting and promoting National Board Certification
- Advocating and designing new teacher mentor programs
- Designing and implementing meaningful and job-embedded professional development
- Monitoring and influencing rules and regulations of the State Board of Education
- Pushing for pro-public education legislation

We work to increase respect for the education profession by:

- Bargaining for higher salaries and better working conditions
- Protecting the rights of educators
- Speaking out on the issues that really matter
- Helping teachers attain appropriate time to plan and protect their time to teach



Putting Our Values to Work: A Guide for the Association Human and Civil Rights Activist

Somebody Ought To Do Something

Often times when people hear or read about a wrong, they say somebody ought to do something about it. But the truth is, when people say that, they often mean: Somebody else ought to do something.

Activists are the ones who step up and do something. They lead by example. What's more, they invite others to join them. Activists make the world go around.

Every day, when 13-year-old Jack McShane rode his bike past New Orleans City Park, it bothered him. It wasn't right. City Park is one of the great urban parks in America. But after Hurricane Katrina flooded it, the city abandoned it. And weeds and long grass took over.

So one Saturday morning Jack took his Dad's lawn mower over to City Park and just started mowing. "Well, nobody was doing it, so I had to," Jack says. And for many weekends thereafter, this skinny 13-year-old boy could be seen somewhere on City Park's 1,300 acres, mowing away.

What's more, Jack recruited other volunteers, mainly other teenagers, into his grassroots mowing club which he named the "Mow-Rons." And the Mow-Rons are now an official, nonprofit charity and have purchased dozens of mowers. Each week they clear a little more of City Park and bring a little more of New Orleans back to life.

"It's really great to see people having fun in the park again," says Jack.

Jack McShane is an activist.

You can be one too. See a problem — take it on!

Sick of all education being reduced to a standardized test score? Do something about it.

Class sizes too big in your school? Make class size reduction your issue, take action.

Worried about the kids who drop out of school and are never heard from again? Speak up, reach out.



Frequently Asked Questions About Being an Activist

Q. Why become an activist in the first place? I already work very hard.

A. Because you care deeply about children and young people, and as hard as you work in your classroom or at your work site, it's never enough to ensure that every child or young person receives the quality education he or she needs to succeed in life.

Q. How do I find the time to be an activist? I am already so busy.

A. If you're concerned about time, start small. Everyone has time to talk, for a minute or two, one-on-one, with a colleague about an issue of mutual concern — or to e-mail your elected representative about an important piece of legislation affecting children and our profession. Do what you can. "Am I doing all that I can?" is the question to ask.

Q. I don't feel comfortable speaking in public. Can I still be an activist?

A. You bet. Public speaking isn't for everyone. But you can write a letter, make a phone call, and speak one-on-one with a friend or neighbor. What's more, the Internet now provides people who are uncomfortable with the public spotlight with a wonderful opportunity to be cyber activists. Besides, a lot of people who once dreaded public speaking actually get good at it, with a little training and encouragement.

Q. I have read about the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, and seen the documentaries, but as much as I admire the heroes of that era, I just don't see myself doing the stuff they did. Is that wrong?

A. We revere the memories of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, the Greensboro Four, and the other civil rights warriors of that era. Their stories inspire us to this day. But their heroism can also be intimidating, if we let it. There are many actions you can take right now to make a difference, and, yes, those actions will probably be less dramatic but no less important than the heroic deeds of yesterday's civil rights warriors. That was then, this is now. We do what we can with what we have.

Q. But haven't all the great human and civil rights battles already been fought and won?

A. Absolutely not. That's a common misconception. It's true racism has changed. It's been beaten back, and in the process, like a virus, racism has mutated into new forms. It comes out, however, when a well-known radio personality insults the young women who played for the NCAA Women's Basketball Championship or when a noose is hung from a tree in a school yard. And racism is cropping up frequently in the current debate over immigration. Racism lives.

Q. But isn't institutionalized racism a thing of the past?

A. No, it is not. Take the chronic underfunding of schools that serve poor and minority children,

for example. It's true that the decision makers who perpetuate this injustice don't espouse racist views. They don't say: "These children are less capable of learning, therefore we will invest less in them." But they still go ahead, year after year, and invest less in some children than others.

Q. Isn't being an activist really a drag — endless meetings, long hours, and mindless chores?

A. Heck, no. People get involved in their Association to meet people, have fun, learn new skills, pursue an interest, and link their lives to some higher purpose. Activism adds breadth and depth to your life.

Q. But what about the endless meetings, long hours, and mindless chores? You didn't address them.

A. OK, there are meetings, hours, and chores. But this is shared work, and you will find camaraderie among your fellow activists when the cause you are fighting for really matters.

Q. I am very independent and I am professional. Will I sacrifice my independence or my professionalism by getting involved in collective action?

A. No. Individuals are strengthened by working together for the common good, not by giving up their individuality. And as education professionals, we advance both our professional status and the quality of public education when we work together.

Q. By becoming an activist, aren't I setting myself up for disappointments?

A. Psychologist Leo Buscaglia said it best: "To reach out to another is to risk involvement. To expose feelings is to risk rejection. To place your dreams before the crowd is to risk ridicule...To go forward in the face of overwhelming odds is to risk failure. But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing."

Q. I am one person, and the problems we face today seem so huge. How can I make a difference?

A. It's easy to feel overwhelmed. The way to avoid this, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., suggested, is to proceed at your own pace, step by step, breaking down our goals into manageable tasks—not worrying too much about the precise political impact of every action we take at any given time. Moreover, there's an old saying among human and civil rights activists that's worth remembering: "An individual can fight injustice, but only a community can do justice."

Q. I understand that if you volunteer, it is very difficult to get other people to volunteer. Is that true?

A. Sure. Everyone's very busy these days. The demands of work and home seem greater than ever. But people still hunger for a higher purpose. It's the challenge of the activist to herald a higher purpose.

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You are an Advocate!

- “I Think I Need Help”
- Defining the source of conflict
- The core of OEA Advocacy
- We’re here for you



"You drive a hard bargain, but okay
— newspaper, pipe, *and* slippers."

www.cartoonstock.com

“I Think I Need Help”

The OEA was formed to address the needs of education professionals; to hear their voices in compensation and evaluation matters, to help them gain both individual and classroom rights, to increase respect for the profession, to better their working conditions, and to create and clarify contractual obligations. The level of expertise of our Center for Member Advocacy in these areas is unmatched by any other education organization or association. As a leader, you take on the role of advocate in some ways. You have the opportunity to advocate for members at the local level. You may be the first person a member will contact when issues arise.

There are moments in the life of an education employee that are of concern and will likely raise “red flags.” In those cases, the employee needs to consider consulting with a building representative, local association officer or regional OEA advocate before participating in a meeting with a building administrator or supervisor. The following is a list of commonly occurring situations and subsequent, suggested phrases.

You may need to represent a member at a meeting when...

...a member reports that when they’re alone talking with an administrator that the administrator gets “hot under the collar”.

...an administrator tells a member, “I’ve had some parent complaints about you,” or “I have some concerns that we need to talk about,” or “There are some rumors in the community about you that we need to discuss.”

...a member is called into a meeting with a building principal and is met also by an administrator from central office and they did not inform the teacher about the meeting’s topic.

You *definitely* need to represent a member or seek advocate assistance when...

...a building administrator uses the following terms: discipline, termination, employment status, job target, admonishment, or negative evaluation.

... a member is asked, "Do you want a building rep?" by a building administrator. For the teacher being asked, the answer is always, "YES!"

Employees don't always know their rights. It is important to read local school board policies and the local negotiated agreement. Always remember: When in doubt, seek assistance from your OEA advocate.

As a local advocate, teach your members this very important piece of knowledge:

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I request that my Association representative or advocate be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions at this time."

Policies on this vary from district to district. Know your rights as set forth in board policies and negotiated agreements.

When you're in a meeting as a representative for a member, be an effective listener to find the *source of conflict*, which may not be what it first appears to be.

The basic sources of conflict are

- Scarce and/or limited resources (time, money, materials)
- Unmet expectations
- Unclear or different goals or values
- Jurisdictional ambiguity or lack of role clarity (Whose territory is it? Whose job is it?)
- Lack of information or misinformation
- Different methods and/or personality styles

Use these communication skills to define the source of conflict

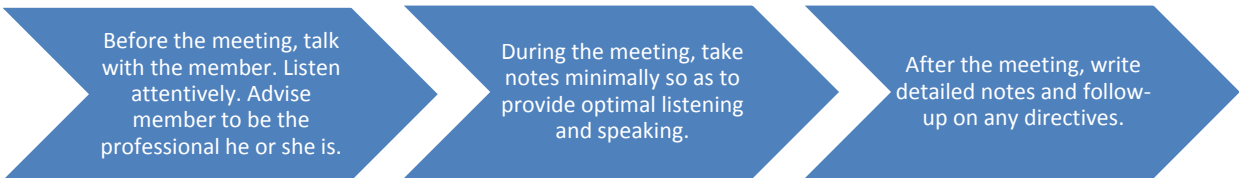


WHEN SPEAKING

- Communicate only relevant information.
- Give the other person a chance to respond.
- Make an effective presentation and/or argument.
- Reach closure.

WHEN LISTENING

- Tune in to the intent and feelings.
- Pay attention to the speaker's total communication.
- Process what is said.
- Acknowledge and respond.
- Minimize distractions and barriers to your listening.



Keep in mind (as to keep peace of mind) the following:

The definition of **conflict** is “two or more persons, ideas, or things attempting to occupy the same space at the same time.” **Conflict** is seldom resolved or ended, but *can be successfully managed*. **Conflict** is inevitable.

Assistance with Job-related Issues Is at the Core of OEA Advocacy

Advocates provide assistance to help empower members in their professional lives. Education employees want to participate in making decisions that affect salaries and working conditions. Whether your district has collective bargaining or meets & confers with your local association, the OEA staff will help you every step of the way.

Member Advocacy

When members face contract violations, loss of job or just have questions regarding their employment, an advocate is there to help every step of the way. They can also assist when facing disciplinary action such as admonishments, plans of improvement, or evaluation issues.

Collective Bargaining or Meet & Confer Assistance

Navigating the negotiations of education employee contracts can be overwhelming. Advocates help members address wages, hours, fringe benefits, and terms & conditions of employment. Other issues that are addressed in bargaining are clarifying educational quality issues such as class sizes, preparation time and professional development within the contractual day, as well as assisting locals with writing newly-legislated guidelines into local district policy and contracts.

Research

The Advocacy Center conducts and publishes research that helps collective bargaining locals negotiate great contracts, including the OEA Greenbook; which contains financial information on every Oklahoma school district; salary schedule comparisons; and extra duty pay comparisons. Local association officers also have access to the OEA Microsearch online website (okea-research.org), which includes the publications mentioned above as well as local negotiated agreements, local salary schedules, and school laws.

Trainings

Advocates not only assist in contractual matters, but also provide invaluable advocacy-related trainings regarding how to respond to an evaluation, retirement planning, and employee rights, responsibilities, and liabilities.

We're Here for You

If agreements cannot be reached or if further action becomes necessary, call your OEA Advocate. The advocate for your region is _____ and the number to call is

_____.

We encourage you

to attend our yearly **OEA Advocacy Conference**. It's held in February each year to teach and sharpen skills in advocacy-related issues.

You Are a Resource

A local leader can't be expected to know everything.

The following section includes a brief overview of the many OEA/NEA products and services offered to members. Inform your members about these services through bulletin boards or newsletters and meetings. Contact your regional staff person or OEA at any time for a more complete explanation.

What You Should Know about OEA

Basic services provided to our members

- Legal assistance for both on-the-job and off-the-job issues
- Professional development
- Partnering with other educational associations
- Lobbying for your professional needs in Oklahoma City and Washington, D.C.
- Printed and electronic publications
- Organizing assistance for local associations
- Conducting and publishing research
- Program development
- Public and community relations
- Member benefits and special services
- Media relations
- Services targeted to education majors at state colleges and universities
- Support and programs customized for support professionals
- \$1 million liability protection per member, per occurrence is an automatic benefit of OEA membership.

Advocacy and Legal

- 8 Advocacy Specialists.
- Three full-time attorneys who are experts in school law.
- Member rights representation from building-level disciplinary meetings to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Local bargaining support.
- Bargaining and member rights trainings.
- Paycheck reading.
- Research (e.g. salary comparisons, extra duty pay comparisons).
- Personal Legal Service Program provided at no additional cost to its members. Some services are free of charge, such as uncontested divorces and writing a will, while others are offered at a discounted rate after five hours of free consultation.

Legislative & Political Organizing Specialists

- Four lobbyists working for you whether it is at the Capitol or working with you on local grassroots efforts.
- Monitor every state agency that affects public education.
- OEA Fund for Children and Public Education works to elect friends of public education, regardless of political party. Every decision made for schools is a political decision. Funds are raised through voluntary contributions to the OFCPE – *no dues dollars are used for political action.*

Professional Development

- Five Teaching and Learning staff available to each local upon request.
- Extensive professional development workshops are available for your local, your school, and your district.
- Leadership training is provided at our Summer Leadership Academy, during your regional leadership meetings, and at your local chapter.
- NEA Foundation has learning grants for our members to enhance their classrooms.
- NEA has online professional development as well as online college courses.

Communications

- The *Education Focus* is published eight times annually and mailed to your home.
- OEA's website – okea.org – is an incredible source of information and member assistance.
- The Insider, OEA's weekly e-newsletter, sent each Monday to your home email address.
- During each legislative session, the Legislative Update is sent to home email addresses every Wednesday.
- The OEA Facebook page offers a forum for all members to find the latest updates and participate in conversations about timely issues
- OEA's Twitter feed keeps members updated throughout the week.
- OEA recognizes members, public education champions, and media outlets at the annual awards ceremony during Delegate Assembly.
- NEA offers a number of different traditional and electronic publications, including *NEA Today*, *NEA Today Express*, *Works4Me*, a video library of education resources. There are also publications targeted to support professionals, student members and retired members.

Student Association

- OEA/NEA promotes teaching as a career through the sponsorship of the OEA Student Program, SOEA. We have student chapters at teacher preparation colleges and universities across Oklahoma.
- Professional development targeted to future teachers is provided at the Fall Conference in October and at the Spring Conference in March.
- Outreach to Teach, SOEA's community involvement project, is an annual highlight. Students from across the state spend one day giving a deserving school a much-needed makeover.

NEA Member Benefits

Members have access to a wealth of economic benefits and discounts at www.neamb.com, including

- Click & Save – discounts on dining, travel, services and shopping.
- Professional development, including an online master’s program (available in late 2010).
- “Money Talk” blog, covering personal finance.
- Discounted insurance for auto, home, life, vision, dental, long-term care, and other areas.
- Home financing.
- Investments.
- Identity theft protection.

Membership

- Nearly 37,000 members in Oklahoma and 3.2 million members nationwide, with affiliates in every state and overseas.

OEA Offices

The OEA is headquartered in Oklahoma City with regional offices in Tulsa, Woodward, and Shawnee.

OEA Headquarters

323 E. Madison, Oklahoma City, OK, 73105

Toll-free: 800/522-8091 – Local: 405/528-7785 – Fax: 405/524-0350

Tulsa Regional Office

10810 E. 45th, Suite 301, Tulsa, OK, 74146

Toll-free: 800/331-5143 – Local: 918/665-2282 – Fax: 918/665-2362

Northwest Regional Office

2315 Downs Ave., Woodward, OK, 73801

Toll-free: 800/439-0393 – Local: 405/275-4060 – Fax: 405/256-0073

Southeast Regional Office

624 W. Independence, Shawnee, OK 74804

Toll-free: 800/563-4230 – Local: 405/275-4060 – Fax: 405/275-1151

OEA History

Where We've Been, Where We're Going

1889

- October 19 – Oklahoma Teachers Association is founded at Guthrie.
- December 25 – Group holds its first teachers meeting at Guthrie Methodist Church.

1890

- The legislature enacts a law providing for public schools in Oklahoma Territory.

1893

- The Association of Colored Teachers is founded in Oklahoma City.

1894

- OTA urges establishment of a “colored” university to be established in Guthrie.

1897

- Langston University opens its doors.

1901

- OTA first recommends the establishment of a teachers' retirement system.

1906

- December 26 – The two territorial associations hold their first joint meeting in Shawnee to form the Oklahoma State Teachers Association.

1907

- Average salaries are \$30 per month with monthly warrants cashed at 70-90% of their face value.

1912

- OSTA revises its charter and adopts a new name – The Oklahoma Educational Association.

1918

- A new charter and constitution is adopted. The organization is renamed the Oklahoma Education Association. Dues are increased from \$1 to \$2 per year.

1925

- The OEA office moves from the state capitol building to the Continental Building.

1934

- The Department of Classroom Teachers is founded at the State Teachers Convention.

1935

- House Bill 212 establishes the first minimum salary scale: \$50 per month for holders of “first grade elementary” certificates, \$90 for those with a baccalaureate, and \$100 for a master’s degree. The average salary is \$982 per year.

1937

- Kate Frank is the first classroom teacher elected president of the Association.

1942

- Teachers gather 244,179 signatures for State Initiative Petition 221.
- July – Voters approve a constitutional amendment providing for a teachers state retirement system.

1944

- OEA launches an initiative petition drive for the Better Schools Amendment providing additional 5 mil levy for schools, minimum state aid at \$42 per student, free text books, and a 1 mil levy for Negro schools.

1946

- November – All four amendments approved in general election.

1949

- OEA calls for the baccalaureate degree as the minimum for a teaching certificate.

1956

- In October, the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers disbands and most of its members join OEA.

1963

- An “associate membership” is offered for nonteaching school employees.

1965

- March 7 – OEA imposes sanctions against the state for failing to provide adequate financing for public schools.
- March – Midwest City Classroom Teachers Association wins the first professional negotiations agreement in the state.
- September 14 – School funding formula for state aid is completely rewritten.
- September 24 – OEA lifts sanctions.

1968

- May – the OEA Board of Directors again votes to impose sanctions in the state.

1970

- June 11 – The professional Negotiations Act is passed allowing teachers to initiate negotiations with local school boards.
- June 17 – OEA lifts sanctions.

1987

- OEA secures due process for support employees with employment in excess of one year.

1988

- OEA wins legislation requiring all schools to offer group health insurance to school employees.

1990

- OEA members close schools statewide for a four-day walkout to demonstrate against the state legislature. The walkout ends when the Senate approves the emergency clause to HB 1017.

1993

- OEA legislation reduces maximum elementary class size from no limit to 20 students per class.
- Reduction of maximum student load for secondary students from 175 students per day to 140.

1997

- Enactment of legislation providing financial assistance to Oklahoma teachers seeking national certification from the National Board of Teaching Standards includes payment of a \$5,000 annual stipend upon gaining such certification.

1998

- OEA leads in formation of the Oklahoma Education Coalition to promote achievement of public education agenda.

2002

- OEA achieved 100% state paid single health insurance coverage for full time education support employees.

2003

- Enacted permanent law prohibiting school districts from reducing teachers' salaries and fringe benefits established in previous years.

2004

- OEA achieved 100% state paid individual health insurance for teachers.
- OEA provided key leadership and support for approval of Gov. Brad Henry's Educational Lottery and Educational Lottery Trust Fund thereby establishing a major new revenue source for public schools without a tax increase.

2005

- OEA secured over \$21 million dollars in new funding for school districts to implement full day kindergarten on a voluntary basis.

2006

- OEA achieved funding for a \$3,000 per teacher salary increase. OEA led a successful fight for a 50-cent, across-the-board pay raise for education support personnel.
- OEA challenged the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) Initiative Petition, a measure aimed at limiting the revenues available to state government for expenditure on public education and other essential services. Due to OEA's activity, TABOR was kept off the ballot.

2008

- OEA collects 243,000 signatures for the HOPE (Helping Oklahoma Public Education) initiative petition. The initiative, which became State Question 744, would require the state legislature to fund K-12 public education at least at the regional average.

2010

- November 2 – Vote to be held for SQ 744.