The start of the new school year is an important period for introducing new educators to the work and value of the state and local affiliates.

The Back-to-School Resource Guide is designed to support state and local affiliates in the development and implementation of a successful organizing plan. In addition, we have provided a number of resources and best practices regarding recruitment strategies and messaging tips for organizing.

GETTING STARTED

As you enter the Back-to-School (B2S) period, Association Leaders should identify someone to lead your B2S Organizing Campaign. The Organizing Chairperson should have a clear role and expectations on putting your plan into action with local leadership teams, association/worksite representatives and/or appropriate stakeholders.

When formulating your organizing plans, your Organizing Chairperson should institute the following:

• Coordinate a meeting and/or conference call with their organizing/recruitment team. Ask them in advance of the call to outline their B2S organizing plan and be prepared to share it with the team.

• Consult with the data and IT staff to ensure their support in moving your organizing plan. Identify reporting and data collecting procedures that establish a clear role for disseminating the information to the responsible parties.

• Identify a communications staff person and/or other state officer to help craft your B2S message. When thinking about your messaging, be sure to develop talking points for use at the worksite and talking points for communicating with the public.

• Prepare weekly reports around recruitment for your local organizing team. These reports should show progress by local, Association/worksite representative and other organizing team members.
**FINALIZING A PLAN AND SETTING GOALS**

Your membership plan should be based on an analysis of your own membership numbers and be determined by your organizing goals. It should be authentically owned by your organizing team and local leaders. A strong plan should include:

- Goals for new hires and early career educators (0-5 years)
- Recruitment goals by worksite, local, Association representative, or UniServ Director
- Goals by constituency group (Certified, ESP, Student, Higher Ed)
- Resources required, including coaching support for the team and the leaders
- Materials (flyers, commitment cards) and organizing message

At the conclusion of the B2S campaign, recognize leaders, association/worksite representatives and other staff who’ve shown exceptional organizing skills that have led the way in growth.

**SETTING RECRUITMENT GOALS**

The goals set should focus on the B2S period. This includes your new hire events and your continued organizing goals that will take you to the end of the calendar year. The NEA Center for Organizing recommends that affiliates look to a 2% growth strategy for local affiliates.

Here are two examples of how State and Local Associations can calculate their enrollment goals:

**Example 1:** Our Affiliate goal is 2% growth in targeted Locals during the B2S campaign, which is a total of 200 new members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Association</th>
<th>Current Membership Total</th>
<th>2% Growth Goal</th>
<th>If Goal Is Met, Membership Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunnyside EA</td>
<td>4,443</td>
<td>88 New Members</td>
<td>4,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smithfield EA</td>
<td>2,899</td>
<td>58 New Members</td>
<td>2,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bench ESP</td>
<td>1,943</td>
<td>38 New Members</td>
<td>1,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma EA</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>16 New Members</td>
<td>848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10,117</td>
<td>200 New Members</td>
<td>10,317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 2:** For all of our locals with less than 80% market share, we want to bring them closer to 80%, with a goal of having them at 80% within the next one to five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Association</th>
<th>Current Membership Total</th>
<th>Current Market Share</th>
<th>Number of Potential Members</th>
<th>Goal for Growth</th>
<th>Goals Met: New Market Share</th>
<th>Goals Met: New Membership Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rose EA</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>22 New Members</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkin EA</td>
<td>1,465</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>112 New Members</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly ESP</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>19 New Members</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PUTTING YOUR B2S PLAN INTO ACTION**

**Recruitment Conversations**

There will be a lot of new faces in your worksite, and we know that few people join the Association without being asked. In fact, the number one reason new employees don’t join is because we don’t ask them.

NEA membership studies also show that the best recruiter is a respected educator. The strongest recruitment programs rely on developing worksite and local leaders who use their own story to share why Association membership matters.

Therefore, the best investment you can make is to continue to meet with worksite leaders; train them in how to have effective one-on-one conversations; provide them with materials that showcase the Association’s work, recent victories and member benefits; and send them off to ask new and returning colleagues to join.

**Conduct an Association Recruitment Event**

Coordinating membership recruitment events is an all-out attempt to maximize your organizing team’s efforts, by focusing on new hires and employees with 0-5 years of experience, and/or hosting an enrollment canvass by visiting potential members’ homes.

**Preparation Phase**

- Contact the Worksite Representatives and helpers and schedule training in preparation for your organizing campaign.
- Provide notices of the upcoming new employee events via phone calls, visits and invitations.
- Pull together your Association recruitment materials.
- Contact your local school administration to request a new-hire list.
- Develop a plan to contact new hires before school begins, or make dates to meet the new hires on the first day of school.
- Review the NEA Member Benefits website (www.neamb.org) for special offers that can be introduced at your association activity.
Implementation Phase

• Set up information tables at your new employee events. Have plenty of handouts and pens on hand to distribute to potential members.

• Have members and/or other leaders on hand to answer questions and ask potential members to complete an Association commitment form (see pg. 9), pledge card and a membership form.

Follow Up After Your Events

• Make personal contact with enrolled members and thank them for joining.

• Set a plan to contact new hires and returning employees who’ve yet to join.

• Plan local events around toxic testing, degrees not debt and other professional issues.

• Offer transportation and/or childcare if there are challenges to attending.

Remember to develop a calendar to track your Association events and check-ins with your organizers and/or worksite representatives during your B2S campaign. Be sure to review the school district calendar for key events to organize around and/or avoid, such as parent-teacher nights and school board meetings.

Resources from NEA’s Center for Organizing

• Does your team need data training? Contact Jessica Garson at c4odata@nea.org if you need assistance.

• Do you need organizing support and/or help developing a strategic message for building outreach? Contact Nathan Allen, Field Coordinator at nallen@nea.org.
MESSAGING GUIDE – COMMUNICATIONS

What is the most important thing you want others to know about your Association? This key message is one that you should repeat over and over. This message should be something you can say in conversation or in presentations to new and returning members. It should be easy to remember and say. It may be as simple as “Our profession needs smaller class sizes” or “There is no such thing as a good education without a quality educator.”

Your key message should be used consistently in membership materials, newsletters and other communications. It may also be distilled into a pithy campaign slogan. You will also need three talking points, stories and examples that support your key message, and these may change based on the needs and interests of your audience.

Finally, it is important to note that your Association should allocate some time during the planning period to develop a brief list of all your Association’s accomplishments from the start of the school year. Below is a sample of a messaging guide followed by a sample organizing flyer:

Introduce Your Association

• As a member of your Local Association, you automatically become part of your state Association and join thousands of other educators in your state. However, your representation does not stop at the local or even the state levels. Your membership includes national representation through the National Education Association.

• Our members include public school employees whose positions require a teaching credential or license, education support professionals, as well as college students studying to become educators, higher education faculty and retired educators.

• Your membership connects you to more than 3 million public school employees across the nation, and it allows you to draw upon the tremendous experience and expertise of fellow educators.

Benefits of Membership

• Our affiliate is proud of its role as the preeminent voice of public education. Our members are professionals who work with students and communities on a daily basis. Because of our vital role, it is very important that members’ needs and concerns are addressed.

Our Vision

• Our vision is a great public school for every student.

Our Mission

• Our mission is to advocate for education professionals and unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education and prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.
Are you willing to make a difference in the life of a student?

[LOCAL NAME] IS LOOKING FOR EDUCATORS TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC EDUCATION AND THEIR COMMUNITY.

THE [LOCAL] IS LOOKING FOR EDUCATORS WHO WILL ACTIVELY ENGAGE AS A MEMBER TO:

- Advocate for student achievement and the profession
- Network with other educators on student-centered issues
- Participate in professional development activities
- Ensure a safe school environment

FOR THOSE WILLING TO INVEST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION.

We want to meet you!

JOIN TODAY AND INVEST IN YOUR STUDENTS, YOUR COMMUNITY AND YOURSELF!
EXPERIENCE ALL THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Becoming a member of the Association gives you a powerful professional advocate through the collective voice of 3 million NEA members.

But the Association is also an advocate for your personal life. NEA Member Benefits offers programs and services designed to help you and your family live better and save money.

As soon as your enrollment information has been entered into the membership database, you will receive an email from NEA Member Benefits inviting you to explore all that we have to offer and to start taking advantage of your Association benefits!

As an NEA Member, you will have access to exclusive discounts and member-only offers, including:

- Up to 50% off on everything from vacations and clothes to restaurants and cell phones
- More cash back on the things you buy most with our member-only credit card
- Great deals on new and used cars. Members save an average of $2,973 off MSRP – and an average of $443 a year on auto insurance
- Free lesson plans and classroom tips, deeply discounted classroom supplies and 5% to 20% off continuing education through the NEA Academy
- Tons of information, resources and tools to help you make smart buying decisions

To Learn More Visit: www.neamb.com/backtoschool
Call Toll-Free: 1-800-637-4636
NEA and its affiliates have a host of tools and resources to make new members the best education professionals they can be:

### Education Votes
News for activists committed to advancing education policies focused on building great public schools and benefiting all students.
- [www.edvotes.org](http://www.edvotes.org)
- [edvotes @EdVotes](http://edvotes @EdVotes)
- [Facebook](http://Facebook)
- [educationvotes](http://educationvotes)

### NEA Today
**NEA Today**
Updated daily, with the latest take on what’s happening in the world of education news.
- [www.neatoday.org](http://www.neatoday.org)
- [neatoday @NEAToday](http://neatoday @NEAToday)
- [Facebook](http://Facebook)
- [neatoday](http://neatoday)

### NEA Website
- [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)
- [Facebook](http://Facebook)

### NEA.org Tools and Ideas
This is where you’ll find lesson plans, activities, classroom management tips, advice and support.
- [www.nea.org/ToolsAndIdeas](http://www.nea.org/ToolsAndIdeas)

### NEA Today Express
**NEA Today Express**
Keep up with the top education news through our monthly e-newsletter.
- [www.nea.org/SignUpExpress](http://www.nea.org/SignUpExpress)

### GPS Network
Join to collaborate, advocate and organize to improve public education by leading a student-centered agenda.
- [www.gpsnetwork.org](http://www.gpsnetwork.org)

### Stop Toxic Testing
**Stop Toxic Testing**
Join a national campaign to put the focus of public education on student learning.
- [www.nea.org/stoptoxictests](http://www.nea.org/stoptoxictests)

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**WE NEED YOU:**

**VOLUNTEER IN LOCAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th>LOCAL:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY, STATE, ZIP:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME PHONE:</td>
<td>CELL PHONE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME EMAIL:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Serve as a Local Association representative at my school/worksite.
- Hold a 10-minute meeting at my school/worksite as needed.
- Sign up for the electronic Legislative Update, sent regularly to my home email address.
- Attend a Local school board meeting with other Association members.
- Assist with my Local Association communication outreach.
- Provide support to my Local Association representative at my school/worksite.
- Work to support a pro-public education agenda.
- Other (share your ideas for other activities).