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2024

### KNEA Association Representative Handbook

KNEA State of Kansas

National Education Association

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# ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK

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Find more resources and downloadables at

[www.kneatoolkits.info](http://www.kneatoolkits.info)



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Association Representative: Thank You!

Thank you for accepting the important position of Association Representative in your local professional association. Your efforts directly affect the programs and services provided by KNEA and NEA.



My experience as an Association Representative helped me learn how absolutely critical your work is.

For members to feel their concerns are heard, they need a representative voice. Knowledge is power and as an AR, you are uniquely positioned to share and help members seek further information about professional opportunities. Whether connecting members to resources or engaging members in our vision and core values, you are a vital link.

Local associations have a variety of names for this role: Building Representative, Association Representative, and Pro Rep, just to name a few. Regardless of what you call the job, this booklet provides an overview of your work.

Within the contents of this handbook, you will find specific information you can use to promote your local association/KNEA/NEA and recruit members. You will also learn how to organize your building team, be an effective information manager and a reliable resource for KNEA/NEA programs.

The guide is divided into your various roles:

- Team Builder
- Communicator
- Recruiter
- Advocate
- Resource

On behalf of the 24,000+ members of KNEA, thank you again for serving your local association, KNEA and NEA as an Association Representative. I pledge my support to assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities.

Sincerely,  
Sherri Schwanz, KNEA President

# VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

## Our Core Values

### Equal Opportunity

We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.

### A Just Society

We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.

### Democracy

We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

### Professionalism

We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.

### Partnership

We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success.

### Collective Action

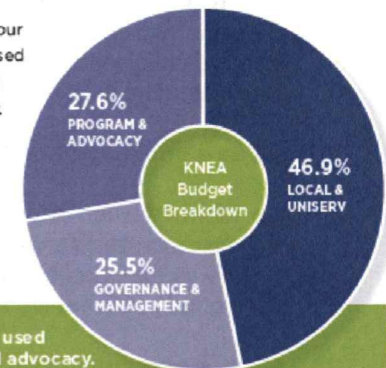
We believe individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.

## Did you know?

When prospective members ask how their dues are used, what affiliation means and why affiliation is important, the following are some facts to share:

### Your Membership Dues

The largest portion of your membership dues are used to strengthen your local association and UniServ. The remainder of your dues work to provide vital resources and advance programs defined by the KNEA Board of Directors.



No dues dollars are used for express political advocacy.

### NEA Affiliation

KNEA is a state-level affiliate of the National Education Association. NEA provides support to state affiliates through advocacy, legal support, grants, trainings, and benefits.



Find more about our mission, vision & core values at [www.knea.org](http://www.knea.org).

## Build Your Team

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

The AR is the elected spokesperson, the presiding officer or the leader of the faculty group at the building or unit level. The role of the AR and how well this responsibility is fulfilled is directly related to the program success of the local association.

### The AR as a policy maker and interpreter of policy

- Attend and take an active part in all AR meetings and other general meetings.
- Be responsible for communicating on behalf of your building at the AR meetings and bringing information back from these meetings to the members in your building.
- Be a staunch supporter of the decision once policy has been established.
- Be an enthusiastic supporter of all association activities once they are established.
- Represent the wishes of your building when voting on policy.

### The AR as a spokesperson for the profession

- Be informed when talking about the education profession.
- Volunteer to represent the association in various civic groups or public forums.
- Work with the parent organization in your building as a representative of the association.
- Be a good public relations person in your building.

### The AR as a communicator

- See that all materials and information are distributed, posted, or otherwise made available to the members. This would include ballots and bargaining surveys.
- Maintain a file of materials easily accessible to the members.
- Convey concerns and requests of the faculty to the local president, Association Representative council, or other local association governance body.
- Design and maintain an association bulletin board(s) accessible to all members in the building.

### The AR as a coordinator

- Let every educational employee know about the work of the association and the profession in general.
- Plan and conduct regular building meetings either before or after association meetings.
- Maintain accurate membership records.
- Enroll newly employed individuals in the association.
- Report membership difficulties to the local president.

You may want to have a person responsible for social activities or someone who will work on political action.

It is more productive and fun to have a team of ARs. Ask for help and let others get involved at a level at which they're comfortable.

Involve the newest members of your faculty and get together frequently to exchange information, keep each other updated, and celebrate your successes.

## Establish Communication Channels

In a sea of information, your association provides relevant and clear information. There are various ways to share KNEA/NEA and local association information. They are the following:

- Personal contact
- Local/UniServ newsletters
- Kansas EdTalk, member publication
- Membership meetings
- Telephone trees
- U.S. mail
- Emails
- Web sites
- Social media sites

There are many sources from which an AR can glean information to share with members in the building - as news updates on bulletin boards, newsletter information, flyers, or subjects of 10-minute meetings.

- Local news stories relating to education
- Kansas EdTalk (scan for important timely information) - This is KNEA's member publication delivered in print and digitally. Make sure to read it to become familiar with issues of importance and to look for members who may be highlighted in the publication.
- Under the Dome - News about the Kansas House, Senate, Governor and the Kansas State Board of Education are covered in this blog. During the legislative session, Under The Dome is updated frequently and delivered via social media, email and at [www.underthedomeks.org](http://www.underthedomeks.org).
- NEA NOW (every AR should be on the mailing list) - This monthly newsletter from NEA is sent electronically to association leaders including Association Representatives. Often this publication takes the form of a poster that can be used for your bulletin board.
- NEA Today - This is the newspaper-format magazine sent to every member via postal mail and email from NEA. Issues having statewide impact and Kansas teachers are often featured. Be sure to circle these articles and post them on the bulletin board.
- KNEA and NEA websites contain a great deal of information from instructional resources to member benefits and more. Web assets currently include the following: [knea.org](http://knea.org), [nea.org](http://nea.org), [neamb.com](http://neamb.com), [neatoday.org](http://neatoday.org), [ksedtalk.org](http://ksedtalk.org), [underthedomeks.org](http://underthedomeks.org), [kneatoolkits.info](http://kneatoolkits.info)
- Social media: Facebook: @kansasnea, Twitter: @kneanews, Instagram: @ksedtalk
- KNEA mobile app available at Google Play app store and at iTunes app store

You never need to wait to receive information from KNEA or the local before sharing news with members. Make your own bulletins.

Do you need assistance with a communications or public relations issue? Contact your KNEA UniServ Director who can coordinate with KNEA Communications to provide local support.

## Designing a Bulletin Board

Maintaining current and attractive association bulletin boards on your campus tells members and non-members the Association Representative in that building takes great pride in membership and wants to share important information of concern to educational employees.

Bulletin board assembly and maintenance can be an easy task. Locals may want to purchase association bulletin boards outright and place them in faculty lounges or other heavy traffic areas. Purchased border or even masking tape can be used to make your own board space. The only requirement is that the board be clearly labeled with your association name.

In addition to important information supplied in newsletters and other association publications, articles in Kansas EdTalk or on [www.knea.org](http://www.knea.org) can be condensed and shared with non-members through the bulletin board. This topical information, provided by KNEA and NEA, tells the non-joiners what they are missing and how they can change their status and become a member.

To keep the bulletin board interesting, change the notices on a regular basis. It's also a good idea to scan the local newspapers and clip out articles of interest and tack them on the board. And remember, the bulletin board is not merely meant to inform, but it may be used to entertain as well. Use school-related cartoons, jokes, etc. Remember to put up a copy of your KNEA and/or NEA posters.

If you have designated another member to keep the bulletin board, that person should be kept informed of current events and given copies of KNEA and NEA publications for posting.

Be sure to bring your best bulletin board ideas to your Association Representative meetings!

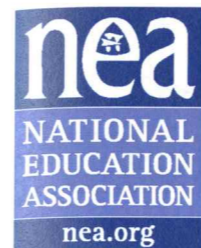
## 10-Minute Meetings

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

Meetings will be successful and well attended only if they are short and to the point. One of the best ways of getting attendance at a meeting is to promise they 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, listing the time, place and topic. If you don't use the AR guide forms, be certain to note the meeting will last no longer than 10 minutes.
- Two days prior to the meeting, place reminder notices in mailboxes.
- 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.
- Start and end on time.
- NEVER exceed 10 minutes for the meat of the meeting but do allow those who want to stay and ask questions the opportunity to do so.



## Be a part of NEA edCommunities on MYNEA360!

Free and open to all, the NEA edCommunities for Professional Practice is the place online where educators, school support professionals, and community members join forces to improve school success. A variety of groups address diverse education issues from Common Core to school bullying, National Board Certification to safe and healthy schools, ESP hot issues to flipped classrooms. You can also form a group of your own to advocate and collaborate on an issue near and dear to your heart.

**CONNECT** with virtual learning events to expand your PD opportunities!

**COLLABORATE** with other educators and education professionals!

**SHARE** classroom-ready resources, assessments, and instruction materials!

**ENGAGE** with those who share your commitment to student success!

This is your community - get inspired and inspire others! Share your strength and exchange ideas and resources with others who share your commitment to our public schools and a student-centered education agenda.

[MYNEA360.ORG](http://MYNEA360.ORG)

You and the building team are in a unique position. You have daily contact and access to both members and non-members in your school or work site. You have the opportunity to make members and non-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 designed to help you reach and convince your co-workers of the value of association membership.

## Worksite Recruiting Plan

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. KNEA strongly recommends each AR write his or her own "Welcome Back" letter or note to give to every employee the first day of school. Write a special note to the new teachers in your building offering to help in some meaningful way.

### Who Do You Ask?

Your first task as a membership recruiter is to review your site roster and determine who at your worksite is a member and who is a non-member. Take the list of non-members 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?
- Are there department/grade level partners?
- Who are the persons with similar interests and/or similar personalities?

### Prepare Yourself

You don't want to go up to a prospective member unprepared. The first thing you must do is determine what your "opener" is going to be. Be prepared to talk about the following:

- What has your local achieved recently?
- What are the current state and local issues?
- Which of the following materials and resources will you use in approaching this person?
  - Local newsletter
  - State membership materials
  - Kansas EdTalk magazine
  - NEA Today
  - Other local resources
  - KNEA and NEA websites

## 10 Tips for Successful Recruiting

### 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 you are proud of the association. Let people know you believe the association can make a difference.

### 3. Be persistent.

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

### 4. Be first.

Timing is important. People are most likely to join when a major activity occurs; they are newly hired; they receive help with a problem; they are already "joiners"; they are asked and asked and asked (refer to #3.).

### 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, your job is to listen, not talk, until you find out all you need to know about the prospective member:

- What does the prospective member know about the association? What are the potential member's 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 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 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 with the potential member.

### 7. Be a partner.

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

### 8. Be realistic.

When asked about dues, know what they are and the terms. Ask your local president for a sample membership form.

### 9. Be enthusiastic.

Show enthusiasm for the association through socializing. Hand-deliver materials with a personal note to the potential member. Invite prospective members to socialize with current members at an association event. Provide the resources from various association web assets (see page 5). They are good sources of information.

### 10. Be sure to follow up frequently.

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

## Messaging & Talking Points

### NATIONAL MESSAGING FRAME (From NEA):

The following message points should frame conversations you have about our union and our work to strengthen public education. They're not necessarily meant to be used verbatim, but to underpin your conversations with prospective members, community members, parents and media.

**Topline:** As a [teacher], I am deeply committed to the success of every student.

**Opportunity:** All students, regardless of their ZIP code, deserve the support, tools, and time needed to learn.

**Student Success:** Good education inspires students' natural curiosity, imagination and desire to learn.

**Quality:** Ensure every student has a caring, qualified, and committed teacher.

#### We work to boost student achievement by:

- Making class sizes manageable
- Providing access to technology and learning resources
- Making sure our schools are safe and modern
- 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 communications between home and school
- 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 Kansas 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

**“OUR UNION WORKS HARD TO PROVIDE EDUCATORS WITH RESOURCES, TOOLS, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED IN THE ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST TO US.”**



Anyone who cares about quality public education can join our campaign to improve our local schools. We launched the My School, My Voice campaign to demand transparency and inclusion in the school improvement planning process. While the new law requires states to involve locals together as a team to advance the needs of students and schools.  
[myschoolmyvoice.nea.org](http://myschoolmyvoice.nea.org)



Are you a new or early career educator? Then we have resources for you! Our new School Me series features tips, advice, life hacks, and guidance from veteran educators to help you feel comfortable and confident in your first few years on the job. Check out podcasts, videos, blogs and more at [nea.org/schoolme](http://nea.org/schoolme)



SupportEd is a leading voice for educators, providing the essential tools, resources, and support to help you as an educator. It delivers the best professional development opportunities, articles, events, and communities from across the universe of NEA online properties.  
[www.nea.org/professional-excellence](http://www.nea.org/professional-excellence)



EdCommunities is a place to connect, collaborate, engage, and share with other educators. Joining NEA edCommunities means sharing your commitment and dedication through an open exchange of strengths and resources with thousands of other education professionals. Free and open to all, NEA edCommunities requires visitors to register.  
[www.mynea360.org/login](http://www.mynea360.org/login)



EdJustice engages and mobilizes activists in the fight for racial, social and economic justice in public education. Readers will find timely coverage of social justice issues in education and ways they can advocate for our students, our schools, and our communities.  
[educationvotes.nea.org/neaedjustice](http://educationvotes.nea.org/neaedjustice)



We're raising our voices to protect public schools. To support every student, we're wearing Red for Ed. We see educators working around the clock to make a difference in the lives of their students and standing up to lawmakers to ask for better pay and school funding. We're standing together, because a strong union means strong schools and communities.  
[neatoday.org/redford](http://neatoday.org/redford)



NEA Member Benefits proudly serves the 3 million members of the National Education Association who are linked by a common thread — their unwavering dedication to their students. Whether you're planning a well-deserved vacation, want to take advantage of everyday discounts, or you're purchasing a vehicle, NEA Member Benefits is there to help maximize your hard-earned dollars.  
[NEAMB.com](http://NEAMB.com)



NEA Micro-Credentials are one of the best ways to improve your practice as an educator and create better outcomes for your students. These competency-based credentials allow you to demonstrate mastery on a variety of subject matter in a personalized and flexible way. The more than 80 micro-credentials can even count as continuing education units in certain states.  
<http://cgps.nea.org/micro-credentials/>



Everyone deserves a fair shot at higher education. But these days college debt isn't just a burden—it's a barrier to accessing the American Dream. NEA understands student loan debt can feel overwhelming; that's why our union has put together resources to help you make the best decisions about your financial future.  
<http://www.nea.org/degreesnotdebt>

**Your Advocate. Your Partner. Your NEA. Join today.**

# You Are An Advocate

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**You are an advocate when you demonstrate pride in KNEA/NEA.** Your enthusiasm will make others want to be a part of our organization. You are an advocate when you give information, help a colleague, advise someone of his/her rights, or call for a professional salary.

**You are an advocate for teaching and learning.** Beyond that, you serve as an advocate for public education, an advocate for student learning, an advocate for academic freedom, and an advocate for employee empowerment.

**As an effective advocate, you will need to do the following:**

**Be familiar with all documents** that address wages, hours of employment, and working conditions. Act on this knowledge by informing colleagues and ensuring the rights guaranteed by these documents are not violated. These documents include your negotiated agreement, employee handbook, and school board policy.

**Understand the needs** of the people you represent. Begin discussions to determine those needs and act to see those needs are addressed. As an advocate, advise colleagues and keep the Association leadership informed of those needs felt across work sites.

**Relay information** to the Association leadership and to the members you represent. Ensure leadership is cognizant of the needs and opinions of the members and keep members aware of the actions of the local Association. When action is needed, organize the work site in support of Association leadership and follow up to see support was provided.

**IMPORTANT:** Association Representatives should be familiar with the bargained agreement, school board policy and school building policies. The best advocate will counsel with members prior to a problem and keep members informed of any new issues. Advocates know where and when to seek additional assistance.

## Representing All Members

There are some aspects of the AR job that are official in nature. Conducting elections is one of those official duties that must be done according to proper procedures. A second official responsibility is to represent your building's members at Association Representative council or building rep meetings.

**Meetings: Why should I attend one more meeting?**

- You are the pulse of your school – make sure your members' views and concerns are heard.
- You need to be able to explain issues to members which means you need to understand the rationale for decisions made.
- You need to cast your vote on issues of importance.
- You can build a sense of teamwork during difficult times if you are well-informed.
- You are KNEA and NEA to many members. If you act as if KNEA and NEA are distant and out of touch, that is what they will think of their organization, too.

**Elections: Why should I pass out these ballots? I don't know any of these people anyway!**

**Answer:** Chances are you'll be responsible for elections of local officers, local delegates to the Kansas NEA Representative Assembly, local, regional and state delegates to the NEA RA, and election of state officers. You can help members get to know the candidates by saving the candidate profiles in KNEA publications and putting them on your Association bulletin board at election time. By attending all meetings, you will meet some of the candidates. Even if you are not familiar with all issues or candidates, your members deserve their chance for input.

Finally, conduct elections and report results according to procedures in a timely manner; it is federal law for the Association to do so.

**Delegate opportunities: Why should I give up a Saturday (for the Sectional Representative Assembly), a weekend (for the KNEA Representative Assembly) or a whole week (for the NEA Representative Assembly)?**

**Answer:** By attending the sectional assembly and the state and national RAs, we have the opportunity to have direct input on how our association is governed, what services we want and ultimately on how our careers will be impacted.

What's more, we get to spend time with others in our profession from around the state and country who care as much as we do about the career we have chosen. The work is not easy but we come away from the representative assemblies invigorated and energized.

## Member Rights Cases: What is the role of the Association Representative?

- Listen actively and without judgment to any complaints, concerns, and issues brought by the member against their employer.
- Take accurate notes, reading back what was written to ensure the information is correct.
- Keep all materials and concerns confidential.
- Call your local Association president immediately with the concern or give your president's name and phone number to the member.
- Stop the member immediately if a possible criminal action is involved. Claims against a teacher of threatening or abusing a child need a specialized type of advice. You do not want to be called to testify on the statement given to you by the member.
- Accompany the member upon his/her request to a meeting with the principal. Your role is to take notes and ask clarifying questions. Your role is not to debate with the principal - the principal is telling the teacher his/her concerns. The rightness or wrongness of those concerns will be evident if a grievance is filed or in a meeting with district administration officials.
- Be familiar with the contract and appropriately advise members on timelines for filing grievances and responding to evaluations. Depending upon your contract, there is a specified number of days to file a grievance from when the incident that violated the contract occurred. Also, state law provides two (2) weeks to file a response to an evaluation.
- Help in devising the best strategy for satisfying the member's needs and work with your local association to secure the strategy.
- Remember, there are always at least three sides to every disagreement: the accuser's, the accused, and the truth.
- Give the emotional and moral support the member needs while realizing ARs are not required to provide psychological services.
- Be familiar with the contract and refer any questions you cannot answer to someone who can.
- Ensure procedures and processes are followed. Don't judge but defend members against accusations and allegations. The unfairness or fairness of the allegations will be decided by someone else.



### ...about insubordination.

Teachers may say to you,

- "I don't think I should have to ..."
- "Can the principal make me...?"

Insubordination is defined as "1. A willful disregard of an employer's instructions, esp. behavior that gives the employer cause to terminate a worker's employment. 2. An act of disobedience to proper authority, esp., a refusal to obey an order that a superior officer is authorized to give." (Black's Law Dictionary 639, 7th edition, rev., 2000.)

or

Insubordination is "a word that means to have a lack of respect or the refusing to obey orders of Ina person in authority." (Black's Free Online Law Dictionary, 2nd edition, 2014)

The standard textbook on employee termination advises: "Work now (comply with directives), grieve later." If any principle of contract administration deserves to be carved in stone, this is almost surely it.

Exceptions - A teacher can refuse an order from a supervisor in some cases, such as the following:

- Where safety is in question: "Teachers will return to the building to search for the bomb."
- Where legality is in question: "Ms. Smith, sign this form from the state and post-date it."

Members in your building may come to you and need immediate advice. Your best response to a member regarding any request from a supervisor that does not fall into these specific exceptions should be: "Do it, then grieve it."

Then, keep accurate records of any damages you incurred, including extra hours worked. This will be important if the member decides to take further legal action against the district.

A teacher may be terminated for just one incident of insubordination. In a Kansas Court of Appeals opinion, the Court said, "Insubordination can be a single incident of willful or intentional disobedience which, when viewed in the light of community standards and subject to judicial review, shows the teacher's conduct was sufficiently serious or aggravated to warrant the sanction of dismissal." (Gaylord v. Board of Education USD 218, 14 Kan. App. 2d 464, [1990].)

When questions arise in your building from members regarding insubordination, your best resource is your local association president and your UniServ Director. Your Association members have the advantage of advice and counsel from KNEA's legal staff who are recognized school law experts.

### ...about a member who is accused.

Association Representatives must not and should not attempt to provide legal advice. However, an effective AR will be able to provide on-the-spot assistance for the member by following the steps below.

Advise the member of the following:

- Do not attempt to answer accusations spontaneously. Request time to obtain help or advice and call your UniServ Office or KNEA immediately.
- Do not share your problem with other teachers, friends or the media until your UniServ Office or KNEA has provided advice.
- Sit down as soon as possible and list the facts as accurately as you can remember them for your own use.
- Gather any and all written documents and include a list of person(s) who may have witnessed the incident.
- DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING.
- Do not submit anything in writing without consultation with KNEA.
- Do not submit a letter of resignation under pressure. Consult KNEA.
- Do not agree to any proposal without consulting first with KNEA.
- Do not try to be your own counsel.
- Do not lose your head.
- BE TRUTHFUL.

Association Representatives should never share the accusations that have been levied against a teacher with others or even family or friends. Accusations make good gossip for some people and our members can be unnecessarily hurt by rumors. Our Association's role is to defend our members.

### ...about a member who is assaulted.

Ensure the member receives prompt and appropriate medical care. Even if the member does not wish to be treated at a hospital, the member should always see the school nurse who will document any physical injury. If emergency care is needed, check with the principal for the district's contracted health care provider.

Notify the district office immediately that the teacher has been assaulted. Help the member follow the verbal notification with a written statement as soon as possible.

Check all board of education and building policies and insist the principal follow any guidelines for disciplining the student.

Advise the member to seek assistance from a local law enforcement agency to file a report or a complaint, complete paperwork, investigate the situation and seek restitution from the student and his/her parents.

Assist the member in filing a workers compensation claim for injuries suffered as a result of the assault.

Advise the member he/she has the right to bring legal action against the parents or legal guardians of any child who intentionally or recklessly causes harm to his/her property.

A juvenile court may order a student to provide the member with restitution for injuries and/or for property damage.

The "School Safety and Security Act", passed by the Kansas Legislature in 1995, states that no board of education shall terminate, reprimand, or sanction any employee because that employee made an oral or written report to or cooperated with law enforcement in the investigation of a criminal act.

#### LEGAL DEFINITIONS

K.S.A. 21-5412(a) ASSAULT is knowingly placing another person in reasonable apprehension of immediate bodily harm;

K.S.A. 21-5412(b) AGGRAVATED ASSAULT is assault, as defined in subsection (a), committed: (1) With a deadly weapon; (2) while disguised in any manner designed to conceal identity; or (3) with intent to commit any felony.

K.S.A. 21-5413(a) Battery is: (1) knowingly or recklessly causing bodily harm to another person; or (2) knowingly causing physical contact with another person when done in a rude, insulting or angry manner;

K.S.A. 21-5413(b) AGGRAVATED BATTERY is: (1)(A) Knowingly causing great bodily harm to another person or disfigurement of another person; (B) knowingly causing bodily harm to another person with a deadly weapon, or in any manner whereby great bodily harm, disfigurement or death can be inflicted; or (C) knowingly causing physical contact with another person when done in a rude, insulting or angry manner with a deadly weapon, or in any manner whereby great bodily harm, disfigurement or death can be inflicted; (2)(A) recklessly causing great bodily harm to another person or disfigurement of another person; or (B) recklessly causing bodily harm to another person with a deadly weapon, or in any manner whereby great bodily harm, disfigurement or death can be inflicted.

K.S.A. 21-5413(e) BATTERY AGAINST A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE is a battery, as defined in subsection (a), committed against a school employee in or on any school property or grounds upon which is located a building or structure used by a unified school district or an accredited nonpublic school for student instruction or attendance or extracurricular activities of pupils enrolled in kindergarten or any of the grades one through 12 or at any regularly scheduled school sponsored activity or event, while such employee is engaged in the performance of such employee's duty.

K.S.A. 21-5413(g) (1) Battery is a class B person misdemeanor. (2) Aggravated battery as defined in: (A) Subsection (b)(1)(A) is a severity level 4, person felony; (B) subsection (b)(1)(B) or (b)(1)(C) is a severity level 7, person felony; (C) subsection (b)(2)(A) is a severity level 5, person felony; and (D) subsection (b)(2)(B) is a severity level 8, person felony. . . .(5) Battery against a school employee is a class A person misdemeanor.

## ...about a member (or you) who suspects a child is or has been abused.

When a member has a reason to suspect a student has been harmed as a result of physical, sexual, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect, the member must report to DCF or an appropriate law enforcement agency.

Your district may have a policy requiring you to notify an administrator if you suspect child abuse. District policy cannot require you to notify the administrator BEFORE making your report to Kansas DCF. District policy cannot require you to seek administrator permission prior to making your report to DCF. YOU have a legal obligation to file the report to DCF regardless of district policy.

If a member is unsure if a child has been harmed, he/she may consult with others such as a counselor, school nurse, more experienced teacher, or administrator. However, this activity can be interpreted as an indication that you suspect abuse and thus you MUST file a report with DCF.

If a team is working on the case, a report from one member of the team is sufficient if the team member makes it clear he/she is reporting on behalf of the team.

The member(s) who reports to DCF is protected from job actions against him/her or from civil suit as long as they report in good faith and not for malicious reasons.

While the report is intended to be confidential, a member must realize he/she may be called to testify, in which case the member's name will become known.

## ...about a member who is suspected of child abuse or neglect.

In a case where a member has been accused of child abuse or neglect, the Association Representative should contact the appropriate UniServ Office immediately. Criminal and/or civil action can result from such accusations and require professional legal assistance.

## What you should know about supplemental contracts.

A "supplemental contract" is a contract for services other than those services covered in the principal or primary contract. Supplemental contracts include those for services such as "coaching, supervising, directing and assisting extracurricular activities, chaperoning, ticket taking, lunch room supervision, extensions to the primary contract, and other similar and related activities. The board of education may not lawfully tie a teacher's primary teaching contract to acceptance of a supplemental contract.

Supplemental contracts end after the completion of the duty and, unlike primary teaching contracts, are not subject to the continuing contract or due process laws. As a result, boards of education are not required to issue "non-renewal" notices to the teacher by the third Friday in May and, conversely, teachers are not required to resign a supplemental contract by the 14th calendar day following the third Friday in May.

Supplemental contracts are limited in scope. In a court case involving NEA-Goodland, the court held any teacher supervision of students participating in extracurricular activities, such as lunchroom supervision, must be governed by a supplemental contract. However, the court also stated any teacher supervision of students that is connected with the duty of educating, such as supervising noon recess, is an inherent part of the teacher's primary contract and a teacher cannot choose to reject these duties.

- Supplemental contracts "expire" after completion of the duty.
- Supplemental contracts are not subject to the Kansas continuing contract or due process laws.
- Once agreement between a teacher and a board of education for supplemental duties is signed, neither may unilaterally resign the agreement; however, the board of education may pay the total amount of the supplemental contract and relieve the teacher of the supplemental duties.
- The decision to accept or reject a supplemental contract rests solely with the individual teacher.
- A primary (teaching) contract may not be conditioned on the acceptance of a supplemental contract.
- Supervision of activities that are not extracurricular is considered part of the teacher's primary contract and cannot be rejected without rejecting the entire primary contract. An example of such duties would be recess duty or monitoring the hall during class changes.

## ...when you are called to represent a member in a meeting with an administrator.

The negotiated agreement will provide guidelines on the rights of individuals to have a representative in a meeting with an individual member. If the contract does not address this issue, the prior practice in your building and district should indicate if it is appropriate. If the member wishes you to sit in on the meeting, it is usually because he or she believes they need additional support. If your request to be present in the meeting is denied, you can always make plans to visit with the member immediately after the meeting while the events are still fresh in the member's memory.

In most districts, a teacher is never refused the opportunity to have a representative present in any disciplinary meeting with an administrator. Association Representatives are often asked by a member to "sit in" with them in a meeting that might be emotional. Many times, the principal will suggest the member bring someone with him/her.

Remember, as an Association Representative, your role is the following:

- Take notes and ask any clarifying questions. Write as legibly as possible, as your notes may be copied for an attorney or others.
- Note the beginning and ending time of the meeting and list all individuals present at the meeting. If someone comes into the room, note the time he/she enters the room and when that person leaves the room.
- Write down clearly and completely what is said in the meeting by both the administrator and the teacher.
- Read any notes back to the parties if you are unclear as to what has been said.
- Note if any follow-up action is to be taken.
- If the principal mentions names of complaining parents or potential witnesses to a violation of board policy, write down the names of these individuals.

The following are some "don'ts" regarding your role as an Association Representative:

- **DON'T** debate with the principal or chastise the teacher. You are generally hearing only the administrator's side.
- **DON'T** talk to the administrator later about the matter in private. If the administrator attempts to contact you and discuss the meeting later, politely refuse to do so. Just tell him/her you feel uncomfortable talking about the issue or the teacher without the teacher present.
- **DON'T** discuss confidential matters with others.

Agreeing to attend a meeting with a principal may be the most important and supportive activity an Association Representative can do. It can be difficult but it can also be rewarding. The teacher you assist in this matter will never forget what you do for him or her.

*Do you know who your  
UniServ Director is?  
[www.knea.org/about-contact](http://www.knea.org/about-contact)*

As an Association Representative you can't be expected to know everything. That's why this manual was designed to provide you with much of the information you will need.

The following section includes a brief overview of the many products and services offered to its members by KNEA and NEA. You may get questions from some of your members regarding some of these. You may want to inform your members about these services through your bulletin board or at a faculty meeting. Remember, this is just a brief summary. Contact your UniServ Director or KNEA at any time for a more complete explanation.

## What you should know about Kansas NEA

### HEADQUARTERS STAFF

There are professional and support staff members in Topeka working for members in legal rights, instructional advocacy, professional development, relations with other education associations, governmental relations, field services, research, program development, public and community relations, communications, training, membership, member benefits and special services, media relations. There are also services for students enrolled in college and university education programs and retired KNEA members.

### UNISERV STAFF

UniServ representatives and support staff are located in offices throughout Kansas, ready to be of immediate service to members.

### LOCATION OF OFFICES

The headquarters building in Topeka is just west of the Kansas Statehouse. Other offices are located in Shawnee, Pittsburg, Wichita, Hays and McPherson. The national headquarters is in Washington, D.C., and there are six NEA regional offices across the country.

### MEMBERSHIP

There are 20,000+ members in Kansas and three (3) million members nationwide with affiliates in every state and overseas.

### STAFF ATTORNEYS

KNEA has three (3) full-time attorneys plus a network of advocate attorneys across Kansas who handle dozens of cases every year and provide assistance through the KNEA/NEA Unified Legal Services Program.

### MEMBER ADVOCACY FUND (State)

More than \$390,000 is spent each year on employment actions, appeals, and in state and federal courts.

### MEMBER ADVOCACY FUND (National)

More than \$21 million is spent each year for legal support of members through the NEA Unified Legal Services Program which shares in funding by state associations.

### LIABILITY INSURANCE

There is \$1 million in liability protection per member, per occurrence, as an automatic benefit of KNEA/NEA membership (\$3 million per occurrence aggregate for all claims); \$250,000 civil rights coverage; \$35,000 criminal suits protection if exonerated; \$1,000-per-bond bail bond coverage; and \$500 for assault related personal property damage.

#### LOBBYISTS

- Full-time professional lobbyists who advocate and lobby on issues approved by the KNEA Representative Assembly
- Member contact teams at the local, state, and national levels
- More than a century of fighting for education in the Kansas Legislature
- Staff assigned to work with the Kansas State Board of Education

#### COMMUNICATIONS

- Kansas EdTalk magazine for all members
- KNEA website with current data and information at <http://www.knea.org>
- KNEA website for leader resources: <http://www.kneatoolkits.info>
- KNEA email listserv for members to be informed of education and association issues on a timely basis
- "Under the Dome" blog for updates during the Kansas legislative session
- NEA Today newspaper for all members
- NEA NOW monthly newsletter for leaders
- NEA Advocate newsletter
- Thought & Action Journal
- NEA Almanac of Higher Education for higher education members
- This Active Life, a bimonthly publication for NEA-Retired members
- Tomorrow's Teachers, an annual magazine for NEA student members
- NEA Affiliate Newsletter Service delivers desktop publishing resources to local association editors, plus newsletter workshops

#### PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAMS

- Extensive professional development seminars and workshops are available for delivery or development for your school district or building. A cost may be associated with a specific program. Check [www.knea.org](http://www.knea.org) for a list of available opportunities.
- KNEA/NEA promotes teaching as a career through the sponsorship of a KNEA/NEA student program known as Aspiring Educators (AE). This program provides three annual scholarships on a competitive basis to student members. KNEA underwrites the cost of the state program and students pay only \$15 for annual NEA dues and minimal local chapter dues.
- NEA Foundation Learning & Leadership Grants fund members' choices for professional development.
- NEA Foundation Innovation Grants support groups of educators who work together to help students achieve high standards.
- NEA Foundation Awards – The NEA, its' affiliates, and The NEA Foundation jointly recognize NEA members through the annual Awards for Teaching Excellence. These prestigious awards honor advocacy for the profession and community engagement as a part of teaching excellence.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- KNEA's Teaching and Learning program facilitates professional development and outreach programs.
- NEA offers fellowships and scholarships for self- or organizational-improvement projects.
- School-based models for restructuring, developed through NEA's Mastery in Learning Project; this consortium continues to build upon the research and learning from the initial effort.
- There are more than 300 print and audiovisual items, all written and approved by teachers, available through the NEA Professional Library to help members advance their professional development.

#### WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

- For a full listing of professional development and training offerings, visit [www.knea.org/aaa](http://www.knea.org/aaa).
- KNEA staff members are available to each local upon request to help members analyze their school districts' budgets for available funds.
- Training is available for members on the statewide appraisal system and/or on developing a local appraisal system.
- Cadres of KNEA members and staff are trained to deliver KNEA/NEA workshops on a wide variety of topics.
- Training and technical assistance is available to implement mentoring programs in local school districts.
- Leadership training is available for local presidents and other officers and through KNEA's REACH program for emerging leaders.

#### ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS

- NEA Member Benefits: [www.neamb.com](http://www.neamb.com)
- Insurance: Automobile, Homeowners, Income Protection, Life Insurance, Disability Insurance
- Up to one-third off on auto rentals
- Prepaid domestic legal services with 30% discounts on hourly rates
- Substantial savings on magazines and books
- Financial: Short and long term loans, investments, credit cards, and tax deferred annuities
- Seminars and workshops presented by NEA Member Benefits
- Understanding credit
- Money management
- First time homebuyers
- Car insurance – Are you getting the best deal?
- Investments

## KANSAS NEA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (KPAC)

The Kansas NEA PAC is a representative group of nearly 50 educators from every corner of Kansas. KPAC is guided by the core values of Kansas NEA and works to promote quality public education for every student. Sometimes prospective members believe their dues dollars go to support political activities. This is not true. Kansas statute prohibits the use of dues dollars collected via payroll deduction from being used for the express advocacy of a particular candidate or issue.

#### Did You Know?

- Contributing to KPAC is completely voluntary.
- No KNEA member dues are used for political contributions.
- Membership in KNEA does not mean that you automatically "opt-in" to NEA political activities.
- Candidate recommendations and KPAC donations are non-partisan and are for state and local campaigns only.

*Find out what's happening "Under the Dome" at: [www.underthedomeks.org](http://www.underthedomeks.org)*



## BEST PRACTICES IN UNION NEW HIRE ORIENTATIONS

Effective orientation programs can have a lasting and outsized impact on the strength of unions. The following best practices offer practical ways that union leaders and staff can develop and enhance their orientations for new bargaining unit members.



### Orient new hires as soon as possible

- First impressions matter.
- Hold orientations as close as possible to a new hire's start date to lessen management's influence on the new hire's views of the union.
- Negotiate for the union's right to a structured time during the employer's orientation program.



### Use intention when selecting facilitators

- Train orientation presenters.
- Pay attention to the race, gender, and age of new hires when choosing union orientation facilitators and informal representatives.
- Select an experienced leader and a younger member to co-facilitate orientations.



### Extend length of orientations

- The longer the orientation, the more likely new hires are to find it helpful.
- Unions will get a greater return on their investment if they lengthen their orientation up to three hours.



### Encourage new hires to join the union

- Explain how being a part of the union advances members' interests both inside and outside of the workplace.
- Ask new hires to join the union, and encourage their participation in union activities.
- Avoid the temptation to oversell what the union can do.



### Provide quality handouts and freebies

- Present information in multiple ways to improve participant comprehension.
- Professional-grade materials and an understanding of how new hires prefer to communicate can encourage sign ups and commitment.
- Free union swag can build new hires' identity with the union, and contributes to longer-term commitment.



### Strive for excellence

- The quality of the union's orientation, both in substance and style, influences commitment to the union.
- Shoddy presentations, typos, outdated information, and poor presenters can cast doubt about the union.
- Remain mindful of the real-world issues new hires face.



### Follow up with new hires

- Recruit and train people tasked to follow-up.
- Union commitment is strongest in new members who experience both formal and informal introductions.
- Union leaders, stewards, and other representatives should reach out to new employees in their first days on the job, and establish the union as a trusted resource.



### Be systematic

- Track orientation participants to assess their engagement in the union.
- Take time to celebrate new members.
- Regularly evaluate and adjust orientations as needed.

Excerpted from "Making the Case for Union Membership: The Strategic Value of New Hire Orientations," by Jobs With Justice Education Fund and Penn State School of Labor and Employment Relations and funded by Union Privilege. Download at [www.jwj.org/newmember](http://www.jwj.org/newmember).

JOBS WITH JUSTICE EDUCATION FUND

## THE BENEFITS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

### Collective bargaining gives educators a voice.

Through collective bargaining, NEA members negotiate for more than their own economic security. They are also securing vital resources to help communities bring in more public resources to improve education, by reducing class size, increasing student learning times while reducing unnecessary testing, and gaining affordable health care for children and their families. The strength in unions is critical to improving our economy and helping working families get ahead.

### Bargaining can help improve teaching and learning in your school.

Teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions, so by addressing school and classroom issues, everyone gains. In negotiations, educators and their employers collaborate on student-centered issues such as setting limits on class size, specifying time for teachers and paraeducators to share effective classroom practices, addressing school health and safety issues, and ensuring teacher input into their own professional learning—all of which help students thrive.

### Administrators and faculty members bring valuable insights to the education enterprise.

To capture everyone's best thinking, local associations typically work with forward-looking districts to set up structures such as joint labor-management committees that meet regularly to resolve workplace concerns and tackle student learning issues.

### Bargaining supports the fight for social justice.

Educators are driven by purpose. There's the day-to-day purpose of helping students learn, but there's also a higher purpose to help improve students' lives, especially for the growing number who struggle with poverty. NEA affiliates are using negotiations to organize local stakeholders around a set of issues that benefit not just our members in a building, but the wider community as a whole. All educational employees and their associations are standing together to demand better for our schools and our children and for the common good of our communities.

### Bargaining gives education professionals a genuine voice.

Every organization, including schools and higher education institutions, can benefit from the ideas and expertise of its employees. Negotiations ensure that education employees have a respected voice in the workplace and are involved in both identifying and solving school and classroom issues, which in turn promotes student learning. Front-line educators are given a meaningful say in such issues as the availability of needed resources, teaching of at-risk students, professional development, peer assistance, and worksite health and safety.

### Bargaining ensures fair, objective employment procedures.

A negotiated contract ensures employees are treated fairly because both parties have discussed and agreed upon rules and processes for the workplace. Employees and administrators understand it is necessary to ensure due process. Associations and management rely on negotiated impasse procedures to resolve problems. Contracts may also set forth procedures and principles for teacher evaluations that are comprehensive, meaningful, fair, and lead to improved teacher practice and student learning.

### Bargaining gives new educators more support.

New teachers often find teaching to be challenging—and even veteran teachers need extra support if they are teaching new subjects. A negotiated mentoring or coaching program is especially helpful so new teachers receive feedback and support about curriculum development, classroom management, parent communications, and other responsibilities. Associations can negotiate or collaborate on identifying the roles and responsibilities for mentors and coaches, the selection process, compensation, and other program elements. The Association can also ensure the mentoring/coaching program aligns with existing teacher evaluation procedures and that all new teachers understand the system.