



What every member should know about...

WORKSHOPS

- Conferences
- Local Based Union Leadership (ULI) Training
- Specialized Training for Bargaining
- Professional Development
- AFT Education Research and Dissemination

STATEWIDE CONFERENCES

Presidents Council

This conference occurs twice yearly, in October and March, with the intent of communicating with and to our locals. It is a one-day conference designed for local presidents or their appointee/s. Topics discussed at these sessions vary as they are focused on current events and issues.

PSRP Conference

The Paraprofessionals & School Related Personnel Conference is held periodically. The focus is dependent on current issues and concerns. The intent is for local PSRP Presidents and/or their appointee/s to come together to learn of and exchange information, strategies and possible solutions.

Strengthening the Union

This is a conference designed to further strengthen our union by enhancing our skills as trade unionists. It incorporates what has been a stand alone bargaining conference and a program on how to build power both politically and legislatively as well as at the bargaining table. Generally planned for April of each year the conference has two strands: Bargaining and Building Power Through Political and Legislative Mobilization.

The former is of most value to members of local bargaining teams as the workshops provide information and generate discussions on current legislative developments, bargaining issues and strategies that will enhance skills and power at the bargaining table.

The latter will interest political coordinators and all who are working toward strengthening their local union. The emphasis is on methods of mobilizing members behind political and legislative issues and developing grassroots campaigns.

State Board Continuing Education Units (SB-CEUs) are available to participants of this daylong conference.

Northern Conference

Initiated in the fall of 2002, the Northern Conference is the result of requests from our "Up North" locals for more accessible workshops. This one-day conference offers union leadership workshops. Depending of the locals needs the selection of workshops could include; Strengthening the Union, Treasurer Training and Fiscal Analysis, Health Care Advocate, Building Representative Training and Handling grievances.

Members can be awarded SB-CEU credit for participation.

LOCAL BASED UNION LEADERSHIP TRAINING

These classes are available to locals to meet the need of their membership and are arranged convenient to the local in terms of time and location. The length of the session is also determined by the local and can range in time from two hours to a full day or conceivably, a series of two-hour mini sessions. SB-CEUs can be awarded to participants of any class with a minimum of 5 hours and certain other requirements. For specifics contact Secretary Treasurer, Lois Lofton Doniver at the main MFT&SRP office.

Your union president can arrange for these workshops through the MFT&SRP Staff Representative. Select from the following:

Activist Training

Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend. The workshop is designed to enhance member knowledge of the role and responsibility of the union and the union member.

Leadership Development

New and current local union officers will gain insights into what is expected of them and how to deal with these responsibilities. In other words, this workshop will provide the tools and give the "nuts and bolts" of running a union.

Internal Communications: Talking with Members

This workshop is intended for anyone who will be responsible for communicating with members, such as, the editor of the local's newsletter or e-news or web site. Political activist who wish to effectively mobilize members and develop a better member to member communications network.

Attendees will design communication strategies that will meet the specific needs of their local. They will learn methods to enhance information sharing and discuss ways to get more members active and involved in the union and its activities.

External Communications: Talking With the Public

For any local leader or member who is responsible for "getting out the message" will find this of interest. Included in this workshop will be how to create a press release and media advisory; looking at ways to best get your story told or defining your issues and how to build relationships with the local media. Because this is a very broad topic the class can be somewhat designed to meet the needs of the local.

Building Representative/Steward

Designed for building representatives or stewards, this workshop should be offered in locals each year when changes are anticipated and for any member who is interested in or thinking about the possibility of becoming a building representative or steward.

Members do not readily step forward to act in these positions and for many reasons, but we have found the primary reason is the fear that they will not know what to do. By offering this training in advance of the need local leaders will notice a difference in the willingness to serve as a steward or representative and perhaps develop a base for future leaders.

Grievance Handling

Primarily building representative or stewards most likely to gain from this workshop, but any member who has a responsibility in the grievance procedure will find it of value.

The primary focus will be in determining what a grievable issue is. The attendee will learn to differentiate between a grievance and a gripe, how to write a grievance and how best to present the case for the grievant. Realistic examples and role-playing are often utilized in these sessions.

Bargaining

Locals bargain their contract on a regular basis and this workshop is ideal for the new or seasoned bargaining committee member. New bargainers will gain a wealth of useful information, and if you have served on a bargaining committee, once or several times, you learn fresh approaches to old problems. There can be a vast array of differing issues of concern, whereby; the member will appreciate having an in-depth understanding of bargaining, the process and pocket full of tools to work with.

Specialized Training for Bargaining

10 Steps to Fiscal Analysis

Designed for the person or persons on the bargaining team responsible for reading and exploring the employer's financial records to determine availability of funds.

Health Care Advocate

As health care costs continue to escalate, the importance of designating a health care specialist within the local becomes of greater consequence. The advocate, while developing an intimate understanding of current health care policy provisions, will analyze costs, compare other carrier options and make comprehensive comparisons.

Treasurer Training

Specifically for new local union treasurers, this provides immediate one-on-one training. AFT online assisted training is also available which is best used in tandem but certainly provides adequately alone. The need and learning style should be determining factors.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Scheduled Classes & Local Based Training

These workshops can be used to satisfy the school district responsibility in meeting state required teacher professional development days. We urge local leaders to discuss the following available options with management to fulfill that mandate.

Another feature that provides an additional bonus to attendees is the MFT&SRP's ability to grant State Board Continuing Education Units or SB-CEUs to teachers and paraprofessionals. Five contact hours in one, two or more related workshops are necessary for the minimum .5 SB-CEU credit. Three SB-CEUs are equivalent to one university or college semester hour. The state requires a minimum of 40 days notice for the issuance of units.

When planning remember that now under the federal government's education reform effort, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/No Child Left Behind, title I paraprofessionals are may fall under higher education requirement guidelines.

Effective Classroom Management: Organizing the Classroom for Teaching and Learning

As mentioned above, teachers and paraprofessionals who wish to learn new skills or improve upon those already in place will benefit. This topic lends itself to either one or two sessions. Attendees will be offered research-based information on the best way to develop classroom rules and how many rules should be posted to work effectively, classroom procedures and best instructional practices, as well as, individual floor plans designed to optimize learning.

NOTE - The MFT&SRP usually offers Effective Classroom Management and Managing Anti-Social Behavior at the Detroit office in September of each year. Please call our office; go to <http://mftsrp.org/professional.html> or e-mail Lois Lofton Doniver for more detailed information at ldoniver@mftsrp.org.

Managing Anti-Social Behavior

Nearly every school employee has had either direct experience or witnessed a student who chronically misbehaves. It is therefore recommended that any school related personnel who deals

directly or, in some cases, indirectly with school age children would benefit from this class. Research based intervention strategies will be discussed along with methods to reduce or prevent disruptive and sometimes, dangerous outbreaks by children with emotional and/or behavioral issues.

.5 SB-CEU will be awarded for a five-hour session or two, two and one half hour sessions.

The School-Home Connection: Parental Involvement

We are all aware of studies that tell us that children, with parents that take an interest and are involved with their education, generally do better in school. And, every school probably has parents who tend to "overhelp" and some who do nothing at all. This class will look into ways to get more parents involved and improve and provide greater opportunities for the student and make your job easier.

The benefits and challenges of parental involvement will be discussed, along with strategies the work to build productive home-school-community partnerships.

All school employees are invited to participate in this workshop and is available at the local's request.

Strategies for Resolving Conflict

Anyone one and everyone should plan to participate in working to improve communication skills and develop strategies to resolve conflict. Conflicts, disagreements, displays of anger, and emotional outbursts are not only classroom issues, they are workplace issues.

Participants will learn to identify and deal with conflict constructively, develop a personal style in facing various situations, and delve into strategies and techniques that effectively lead to resolution.

This too, is available upon request.

AFT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION (ER&D)

<http://aft.org/erd>

The American Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) Program is a research-based professional development program designed to build the local union's capabilities to provide professional development services to its members or as a cooperative effort with the school district.

The program was developed in 1981 with the express purpose of passing on tried and true methods of teaching and learning to preK-12 and postsecondary classroom teachers. The program was later expanded to include paraprofessionals, and further providing a course on managing student behavior in non-classroom settings specifically for all school-related personnel.

For more information go to <http://aft.org/erd> and discover what, where and when courses are offered.