ARP Bargaining Strategies
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Consultation with unions is required

- Whether your state is covered by a comprehensive or more limited bargaining statute, locals should assert their professional authority to ensure that you are part of the decision-making process.
- Bargaining for the Common Good – align with other community stakeholders, parents, community groups, and other unions. Especially important to advocate for equitable funding for schools.
How Can Funding Be Used?

- Correct longstanding inequities, including staffing and other resources.
  - Dept of Ed specifically notes that these funds can be used for compensation and improving educator recruitment and retention.

- Strengthen student and educator supports, ranging from safe in-person instruction to other long-term supports, including community schools.

- Launch new initiatives (pilot programs to counter one-time money argument).
Increased or enhanced compensation

- Best option – base-building, across-the-board salary increases
- Additional pay for working in hard-to-staff schools
- Additional pay for additional roles and responsibilities
  - Additional days or extended days
  - New roles and responsibilities, such as team leaders or instructional coaches, additional certifications or credentials (career ladders)
  - ESPs - pay for work in higher classifications
- Retention bonuses
Additional staff

- Ensure more manageable class sizes and caseloads
- Address the need for student evaluations (backlogs) and services
- Adapt lower ratios for school health professionals
- Ensure that every student has access to physical and mental health supports
- Help our members implement the safest practices
- Bargaining provisions that provide adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, cleaning and disinfecting materials and training, and testing, inspecting, and upgrades to ventilation and other facility improvements
- Joint labor-management health and safety committees
Equity building provisions

- Equitable access to internet connectivity and technology, including any necessary assistive or adaptive devices.
- Ensure all students have nutritious meals.
- Purchase new playground and PE equipment.
- Bargain or collaborate to implement culturally responsive training and programs.
- Require that the employer take clear steps to ensure that students and families are not subject to bullying harassment based on race, ethnicity, or perceived national origin.
- Provide enhanced translation services.
- Create teacher hiring and retention programs that focus on teacher of color.

Adequate planning and collaboration time

- Provide dedicated time to special ed teachers and SISPs and paraeducators to address any backlog in evaluations.
- Provide appropriate substitute coverage for teachers and other staff required during IEP meetings.
- Develop support for educators in early grades to plan for young students who have had little experience with traditional schooling.
- Allow educators to focus on mental health and social-emotional well-being.
Enhanced professional learning and growth

- Comprehensive mentoring and induction programs
- Career ladders
- "Grow Your Own" programs developed with higher education institutions that enable ESPs to become teachers
- Train ESPs to assist in the classroom to maintain or increase their hours and provide career growth opportunities.
- Additional compensation for advanced credentials or certifications or tuition reimbursement
Enhanced leave provisions

- Paid leave for COVID-related illness separate from existing paid sick leave policy
- Paid leave for vaccinations/boosters and potential side effects for members and their families
- Accommodations for medical conditions that are considered high-risk for COVID, including family members
Additional Considerations

Community schools
- Work with school district to increase the number
- Contract language should reflect any site-specific policies, and address transferring in or out

Contracting out/privatization
- Limit volunteers or outside tutoring services
- Strengthen or add anti contracting out language
Overview

- Section 127 of the IRS Code: Employers can contribute up to $5,250 per year per employee (not taxable).
- Can pay off federal or private student loans (not spouse or dependent)
- Benefit lasts until January 1, 2026

Bargaining caveats:

- Parties must create an EAP to distribute fund and terms must be in a separate document like an MOU and b
- Employer must notify eligible employees about the benefit
- If the employer makes the payment directly to the employee, then the employee must provide proof to the employer that the payment is being used to pay off a loan
- Department of Education Public Service Loan Forgiveness overhaul: nea.org/studentdebt
For more information

https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/covid/protecting-you-and-yours

Staff only website: www.neacollectivebargaining.org

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