

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.

- **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).**

How Can Funding Be Used?

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**

School health and safety beyond COVID

- 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 student 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.

<https://www.nea.org/resource-library/bargaining-common-good-sample-demands-safe-and-just-person-learning>

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

Student debt

- **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](https://www.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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