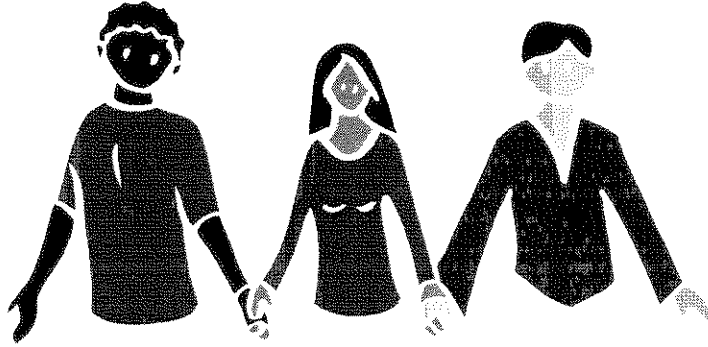


Wappingers Congress of Teachers



We Stand United

Building Representative Training Packet

General Practices for Building Reps:

I. Attend all monthly RA meetings

II. Maintain open lines of communication

- Senior reps are to keep junior reps informed and updated of all building union issues at all times
- Schedule monthly meetings between all reps and building administration regardless of there being an impending union issue, meet with administration regularly

III. Conduct monthly union meetings on a building level which are separate from building faculty meetings

- as per constitutional guidelines, this meeting is to be conducted within a weeks time of the monthly RA meeting
- create an agenda for each meeting to ensure all relevant information is reported (this does not have to be passed out to all attending members)
- have a print copy of RA meeting agendas, minutes, and reports available for members to view if they wish

IV. Maintain a union bulletin board(s) or designated union area(s) in the building with relevant information

V. Box union newsletters, fliers, memos, and important notes within 48 hours of receiving

VI. Encourage members to sign up for e-mail news updates from the WCT

- members must use a non-school email account

VII. Partake in community and union activities and encourage members to do the same

VIII. Stay out of personal issues between members

- building reps must remain neutral and know when a situation is an administrative issue

IX. Conduct WCT elections on a building level

- *Elections:* reps must facilitate elections for officers as set forth by Article X of the Constitution and By-Laws. If any current building rep is running for an elected office, they should not supervise the voting.
- *Building Representative Election:* The election of building representatives should occur as soon as possible in September before the first Representative Assembly meeting. The election is done by secret ballot run by the current senior building rep. If the current senior building rep is running, then the voting should be facilitated and tallied by another member who is not running for a position. When the votes are tallied, the member receiving the greatest number of votes is the senior building representative.

X. Know your non-tenured teachers

- instill the importance of being proactive about sick leave and being aware of Monday and Friday absences
- let them know that they cannot plan a vacation for Spring Break because of the give back days - that vacation is not guaranteed

XI. Keep a log containing all union issues

- be sure to included dates, brief synopsis of issue, what actions were taken and the result of the issue

XII. Know what the Family Medical Leave Act - FMLA (maternity leave, family illness) and the Sick Day Bank are to answer basic questions, but do not give advice to members

- advise members to call the Human Resources Department since each situation is unique
- know that according to the contract, immediate family = spouse, child, parent or sibling

XIII. Union issues are to be handled with the highest level of confidentiality

Ways to Handle a Union Issue

- Listen to and write down the information given by the member
- Refer to the contract to verify that there is language infraction or if the issue should really be something addressed by the EDC
- If it is an actual union issue and cannot be settled on a building level, contact the V.P. Elementary (Michael Lyons) or the V.P. Secondary (Ray Koretsky) with the issue
 - Depending on the issue, it may be then brought before the WCT Executive Board

When is an issue a potential grievance vs an Educational Development Committee issue?

A potential grievance means...

- There is an infraction of contract language
- The issue goes against past practice
- The action is deemed to be discriminatory or illegal

EDC issues are non-union issues that relate to curriculum, teaching methods, aids and materials, and any other matter pertaining to the improvement of the educational programs carried on or proposed to be carried on in the District (CBA 14.1 through 14.9)

Steps to Filing a Grievance

If an issue is deemed grievable, here are the following steps a building rep needs to follow:

- Present a Stage I grievance to the Building Principal or Coordinator. They then have two days to respond in writing.
 - Example: "I am here to present a Stage 1 grievance based on the infraction of Article ____ in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Please respond in writing within 2 days."
 - *2 school days during the school year, 2 calendar days over the summer.*
- Once you've received your written response, contact Michael Lyons (V.P. Elementary) or Ray Koretsky (V.P. Secondary).

ARTICLE 14
EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Page 16-17 of the CBA)

14.1 The District and the Congress agree that the professional personnel are, and should continue to be, a major source of developments and innovations in improving the educational programs carried on in the District. The parties agree further that it is important for the professional personnel to participate in the overall coordination of studies, projects, and other activities directed toward the development, improvement, and implementation of such programs, toward the evaluation of existing programs, toward the devising, testing, and introduction of new programs, and toward research in pertinent educational areas.

14.2 Accordingly, the District and the Congress agree that an Educational Development Committee shall be established from the professional personnel of the District, to consist of 12 members of whom six shall be designated by the Congress and six by the Superintendent of Schools. At least four of the latter shall be from the administrative unit. The chairman of this committee shall be one of the designated committee members and shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools.

14.3 This committee shall establish its own times of meeting and rules of procedure. This committee shall consider all proposals from any source respecting curriculum, teaching methods, aids and materials, and any other matter pertaining to the improvement of the educational programs carried on or proposed to be carried on in the District. Where a proposal is made that a specific subject be studied by a particular person or a group of persons, this committee shall receive and review the results of each study and will endeavor to avoid duplication or repetition of effort.

14.4 This committee shall regularly report to the Superintendent of Schools the matters it is considering and its recommendations respecting the same. All recommendations from the committee will be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools for transmittal to the Board.

14.5 In each school building within the District, there shall be a subcommittee of the Educational Development Committee, consisting of professional staff which shall consider matters pertaining to the improvement of the educational program in that building. Membership on the subcommittee shall be on a voluntary basis. All recommendations from the subcommittee shall be submitted in writing to the Principal of the school building and a copy of such recommendations shall also be sent to the Educational Development Committee.

14.6 If the Principal and the subcommittee cannot reach agreement on the recommendations, the subcommittee may send copies to the Superintendent of Schools.

14.7 The Educational Development Committee may make recommendations with regard to the qualifications of principals, assistant principals, coordinators, teacher coordinators, teachers-in-charge, and athletic coaches.

14.8 The Congress shall have the right to make recommendations to the Educational Development Committee with regard to the adoption or use of Federal and State programs.

14.9 Nothing herein shall interfere with the administration's or Board's exercise of its authority or prerogative under New York State Law.

IF...	THEN...
a member is denied his/her uninterrupted lunch.	speak to the principal or asst. principal to have the member given an uninterrupted time while his/her class is being covered
a member asks about taking a personal day	tell the member to call the sub service 48 hours prior to taking the day - they do not need to fill out any forms or get any permission, but they should not be surprised if they are questioned about their absence if it coincides with a long weekend or a holiday
<p>a member comes to you because s/he was questioned about taking a personal day in which they gave the 48 hours notice</p> <p>*****</p> <p>a member comes to you because they have to take a personal day and cannot give the required 48 hours notice</p>	<p>tell the member that they are not required to give a detailed explanation but can reply with this statement: "I have read the language in article 11.5 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and am using the personal business leave within the parameters set forth by that language."</p> <p>*****</p> <p>tell the member that they must speak with the building principal / assistant principal or coordinator to get approval. Refer to Article 11.5 in the CBA:</p> <p><i>"Personal Business Leave (Article 11.5) - Unit members may use two school days for personal business during the school year without loss of pay. Personal business leave shall be used for personal business which can only be accomplished during the school day. Except in an emergency and with the approval of the Building Principal or the Superintendent or his/her designee, personal business leave may not be taken on the day before or after a holiday or recess period. Personal business leave shall not be used for vacation or for outside employment. Except in an emergency, at least two days advance notice shall be required. Unused personal business days shall be added to a unit member's accumulated sick days at the end of each school year."</i></p>

<p>a tenured member comes to you because s/he received a bad observation</p>	<p>have the member follow these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a response which only addresses professional concerns pertaining to the small window of time in which an administrator is to be observing • This response is time sensitive and is to be written and given to the administrator in 5 days - during the school year that means 5 school days, over the summer that means 5 calendar days • Let the member know that if s/he wants, any building rep can assist in writing the response and that s/he is entitled to have a building rep sit in on the meeting to act as a witness or as a second pair of ears
<p>a non-tenured member comes to you because s/he received a bad observation</p>	<p>have the member follow these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit down with a building rep and write a response which only addresses professional concerns pertaining to the small window of time in which an administrator is to be observing • This response is time sensitive and is to be written and given to the administrator in 5 days - during the school year that means 5 school days, over the summer that means 5 calendar days • Let the member know that s/he is entitled to have a building rep sit in on the meeting to act as a witness or as a second pair of ears • Remind the member that the objective is to become a good teacher and to achieve tenure so take the administrator's comments as constructive criticism and not as a personal attack

<p>a member comes to you pertaining to a dispute with another member</p>	<p>stay out of it! This is an administrative issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the member speak to a TC / AP / Principal / Coordinator to help solve the issue
<p>a member comes to you with a health and safety issue such as mold growing in the classroom</p>	<p>document the issue (logs, journal, e-mails, or pictures) and report them to the Health and Safety Committee members Ellen Korz (hsc@wcteachers.org) and Jane Stockslager (secondary.JS@wcteachers.org). Please remember to do this in a way that does not use the school's GroupWise E-mail system</p>
<p>a member comes to you with a question about the Welfare Trust Fund benefits or needs a claim form</p>	<p>direct her/him to the WCT web site and printable claim forms at WCTeachers.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If s/he still cannot find what s/he needs then have her/him call the WCT Office at 227-5065
<p>There is a malfunction of the infrastructure of a building or an immediate health and safety issue such as no water, unable to use the restrooms, or no electricity / heat</p>	<p>the senior building rep will speak with the principal to check on how the District is addressing the situation and the status of the remedy that is being implementing. If the students are dismissed because of a health and safety issue, then the teachers are to be dismissed as well. If this does not occur immediately call the president of the union.</p>
<p>a member comes to you because they were not able to accomplish a given task because of the lack of resources, materials, or the District has cut back on the allotted time</p>	<p>tell the member they are to do the task to the best of their ability and then in writing notify the supervisor with what they were not able to finish due to the lack of resources, materials, or time.</p>

*THIS FORM MAY BE USED IN WRITING ANY
EVALUATION/OBSERVATION/REPLY RESPONSE*

MEMORANDUM

To: Name of Administrator
From: Name of Teacher
Date:
Re: Observation Report Dated: _____

In have received your observation report dated _____. This memorandum shall serve as my response to your report.

As to paragraph _____ I respond as follows:

As to paragraph _____ I respond as follows:

As to paragraph _____ I respond as follows:

It is my understanding that a copy of this response shall be attached to and made a part of my observation report which will then be placed in my personnel file.

REBUTTING A NEGATIVE EVALUATION

QUESTION	DRAFT COMMENT/RESPONSE
1. Was your observation/evaluation written objectively?	
2. Did the observation/evaluation focus on observable behavior?	
3. Were the evaluation comments accurate?	
4. Did your administrator criticize you only on minor things or details?	
5. Were all the facts that were in your favor presented in the evaluation?	
6. Was information, materials, etc. you needed to complete work assignments unavailable or difficult to obtain?	
7. Were the observation/evaluation comments specific or general?	
8. Were the observation/evaluation comments vague and/or ambiguous?	
9. Can the observation/evaluation comments be documented by the administrator?	
10. Were the observation/evaluation comments documented by the administrator?	
11. Did the observation/evaluation focus on personality traits or behavior instead of classroom performance?	
12. Were the criticisms accurate and can they be substantiated by fact?	

This is not an all inclusive list. In your written response to your evaluation, be factual. List all of the positive factors which may not have been included in the report. Do not use inflammatory language. Let your administrator know that you are a dedicated and conscientious employee who can accept constructive criticism. But do not be afraid to defend your record. Contact your union representative for his/her assistance in preparing your written response.