

## Building Rep Basics

Roles include:

- Organizer
  - Contact members on a regular basis -Hold 10 min meetings
  - Reach out to new employees
  - Check-in with "potential members" -those who have left the union or did not join
- Communicator
  - Be a voice for members by listening to concerns
  - Communicate issues to building admin if it can be resolved at this level
  - Share concerns with the executive council or president
  - Post/distribute PCEA materials in your building
- Leader
  - Be a positive and professional example
  - Provide professional resources and support (use the IEA website to help you or ask another building rep)
  - Discourage the spread of rumors
- Advisor
  - Refer to the contract and offer solutions
  - Address concerns at an early stage
  - Do not share concerns told in confidence with coworkers. Members will not come to you if they don't feel they can trust you.
- Contract Enforcer
  - Have a general understanding of the current contract (our contract can be found on the mypcea site and the district site)
  - Represent employees (union or not) in disciplinary meetings (remind members of their Weingarten rights: If you have reason to believe that you might be disciplined, you have the right to union representation)
  - Be sure any possible contract violations are corrected promptly. Let the building admin know and the president.
  - File grievances with the grievance committee chair when necessary.
  - Protect the rights of members. If you see or hear something that is not right, speak up. Talk to the members involved and help them decide what the next step will be.

If you are unsure, ask! Check with another building rep or someone you know has been a rep in the past. Talk to your union president or one of the other officers. We are all happy to help.

***I've been called in and told to bring a union rep! What should I do now?***

***Before the Meeting:***

- If there is an incident: As soon as possible, write down everything that happened. Include: date, location/s, names of all involved persons, witnesses, and actual words spoken
- Ask a rep in your building/department to attend the meeting. During the school day, it may not be possible for PCEA officers to find a rep for you. Contacting a rep yourself will be the quickest and ideally allow some time for him/her to be filled in on the situation by you, the administrator or both.
- Either the building rep or the member should gather as much information from the administrator as possible prior to the meeting.
- Insist on a few minutes for a private conversation between the member and the building rep before the meeting starts.
- You can ask for the meeting to be rescheduled if a building representative is not available.

***During the Meeting:***

- The building rep's primary role at the meeting is to be a witness and to keep the meeting focused on its stated purpose.
- Listen carefully and take notes during the meeting so the member can focus on what is being said and there is a record of the meeting.
- The building rep is allowed to regard the administrator as an equal as you attempt to resolve problems. Do not be intimidated. Be constructive.
- As the representative, you may ask for a break if the member needs it and you may end the meeting and ask to reschedule if the situation becomes out of hand.

***After the Meeting:***

- After the meeting, the member and building rep should maintain confidentiality.
- Review notes and add necessary details.
- Keep your local president informed of pending or possible grievances.

***Remember:***

- School administrators do not have to advise members of their right to representation.
- You have the right to "a" representative of your choosing, not "the" representative of your choosing. However, The administration does not have the right to pick the union representative for the member.
- A member should NEVER refuse to attend a meeting with an administrator even if his/her request for representation is denied. Attend the meeting now; grieve later.

***Don't go there: If any of these situations arise contact your local president before meeting.***

- DCFS investigations
- Criminal allegations
- Sexual harassment
- Assault on an employee
- Member to member conflict, including harassment concerns
- Workers Compensation
- Discrimination
- Unemployment concerns