

Hello All,

The Freedom Foundation is an anti-union group that is trying to get members to opt out of membership in their unions. They have mailed out several flyers to OEA members encouraging them to save money by opting out while still receiving the benefits of your local Collective Bargaining Agreement.

While it is true that even those who don't "join the union" still get the benefits of your Collective Bargaining Agreement, what members don't receive are member benefits that are just as important. When they don't join, that means they are also not members of your local Association. This means they cannot attend your member meetings, they can't vote on your contracts or MOUs, they can't run for office in your union and they can't vote on your officers, etc.

They also lose the \$1,000,000 liability insurance that NEA carries for them in the event they are sued in the course of their job and they don't have access to an OEA attorney if the district takes job action against them, if they are reported to ODE for a real or perceived conduct violation, if the district discovers they overpaid them and the teacher ends up owing the district a large sum of money (I've had that one happen 6 times in the 10 years I've done this job, yikes), etc. There are many other things that they don't receive as non members as well.

It's important that members realize what they are losing individually by not remaining a member. You also need to realize that your union as a whole will lose bargaining power for things like pay, benefits, insurance, working conditions, and even COVID teaching/working conditions if membership is weak or appears fractured; that will impact them in the long run as well.

As usual, we are under attack...and this time it is at the very heart of our ability to advocate for your members in all of the other areas that are working against them...by the very people who are the ones pushing those things.

Let me know if you have any questions. Thank you so much!

Susan