

# Educators are more powerful when we have a collective voice

Working together in union allows us to make meaningful improvements not just to our pay and benefits, but for our students, profession, communities and public education as well.

Here's a look at the three frames of comprehensive unionism. Elements of each one can help us achieve our collective goal—improve educator working conditions that support a high-quality learning environment where all students can succeed and communities can thrive.

Industrial unionism	Social justice unionism	Professional unionism
<p>Collective power to meet bread-and-butter needs and ensure fairness from management.</p>	<p>Advocacy for equity to help all students succeed through active engagement in the community.</p>	<p>Collective voice to improve the practice of classroom teachers and other education professionals.</p>
<p><b>View of management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union organizes educators as an independent force and advocates for educator priorities and standard of living.</li> <li>• Emphasizes separation of management and union roles in defining educator work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>View of management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management, labor are partners in engaging families, community and ethnic groups to build support for public education.</li> <li>• Advocate together for levies, grants, etc., and resist inequitable decisions based on race, class and gender.</li> </ul>	<p><b>View of management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values labor-management collaboration to improve public education and the profession.</li> <li>• Emphasizes programs and priorities to improve school quality and student achievement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bargaining</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bargaining is mainly bread and butter issues of salary, hours and working conditions.</li> <li>• Views the contract as the way to institutionalize changes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bargaining</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infuse bargaining with concerns that address race, class, gender, empowerment and equity issues.</li> <li>• Change can only be institutionalized and sustained by organizing rank-and-file members and community.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bargaining</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiations should go beyond pay and benefits to address educator quality and support issues.</li> <li>• Contracts are a way to codify change once the bugs are worked out.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Role of parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent outreach when the union is in bargaining crisis or labor-management conflict.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Role of parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaches out to community allies in strategic alliances to improve the quality of education; maximizes parent role in improving school effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Role of parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates educator expertise and training when collaborating with parents to improve student's learning.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from the Mooney Institute for Teacher and Union Leadership "Three Frames" document.

