

Building a Strong Education Union: Facts on Union Dues

The local union that Clovis educators are building is being created from the ground up by Clovis educators to have a greater voice in the decisions that affect Clovis students and educators. Unionization also includes affiliation with the California Teachers Association (CTA) and National Education Association (NEA). CTA and NEA are comprised of local and state affiliates, respectively, and focus on policies and legislation that strengthen public education. In addition, CTA and NEA also provide staffing and legal support, trainings and other benefits to local and state affiliates and to individual union members.

Importantly, educators who are forming their union do not pay union dues until they vote to approve their first contract. Union dues provide the resources for all this support so we can be successful in creating the public schools all our students deserve.

So how will my union dues be used?

- **Member Supports:** Staff support for Clovis educators, who will have a dedicated CTA staff person, to support your Clovis elected leaders (once elected by Clovis educators) to enforce your first contract and assist in all areas of your new Clovis union like negotiations, union committees, legal support, member trainings, etc.
- **Advocacy for Education:** Part of your dues are used for our state and national advocacy work to promote policies and legislation to strengthen public education, such as more funding for schools, lower class sizes and other supports for educators.
- **Operations/Infrastructure:** A part of your dues are also used for offices, administration and office equipment around the state to support all the staffing needed to support local chapters.
- **Other Supports:** The other portion of your dues dollars go to supporting a variety of advocacy and training programs such as governance and leadership development, supporting community engagement work, organizing other non-represented educators, and strengthening the education profession, to name a few areas.

Will my dues be used for contributions to political candidates?

No, not unless you want to contribute to CTA's statewide political action fund. If you don't want any portion of your total dues (approximately \$22 a year) going to CTA's Association for a Better Citizenship fund (CTA/ABC), simply check the box on the membership form to opt out.

To support candidates running for federal political office, there is also a voluntary political action fund—the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. Like the CTA/ABC fund, contributions are totally optional. However, unlike the CTA/ABC fund you must opt in and indicate how much of your current dues you'd like to contribute.

Are there any other voluntary contributions I should be aware of?

Yes, your union membership and affiliation with CTA also includes \$20.00 of your total dues going to CTA's Foundation for Teaching and Learning, which provides trainings and grants to educators across California to strengthen teaching and learning practices. However, you can opt out of having the \$20.00 of your dues going to the Foundation.