

Salem-Keizer Education Association



Building Representative How-To Guide 2021-2022

More resources can be found at:

<https://salemkeizerea.org/home>

SKEA - Salem OEA Office

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Stronger Together.

**An injury to one
is an injury to all.**

“A good organizer has to work hard and long. There are no shortcuts. You just keep talking to people, working with them, sharing, exchanging and they come along.”

— Cesar Chavez

Rep. Assemblies 2021-2022

4:45 - 6:15pm

2540 Coral Ave NE

August 25

September 29

October 27

December 1

January 26

February 23

March 30

April 27

May 25

Meetings may be virtual or in-person.

Table of Contents

	Page
Best Practices	2
Expectations	2
Representative Responsibilities	3
At R.A. and after R.A.	
Monthly Checklists	
Work Together, Collective Action	4
Member Concerns	5
Investigative meeting, potential grievances	6
Contract Highlights	
Robert's Rules cheat sheet	7-8
Membership	9
Weingarten Rights	10
Terms to Know	10
Committees Brochure	

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Eight Best Practices

For your journey to becoming a great Building Rep

1. Don't expect to know all the answers or any of the answers. **Ask questions** and ask for help.
2. **Communicate** with a pragmatic optimism. Follow up is everything!
3. **Acknowledge** difficulties and setbacks and frustrations, but highlight progress. Avoid toxic positivity.
4. While the issue might seem insignificant to you, it's not to the member—what would they like to have happen? Learn about the issues that are important to your members by **listening** to them on a regular basis.
5. Listening and **empathy** go a long way in most circumstances.
6. Make person-to-person, face-to-face **contact** with every person in your building. (For large buildings, remember that you should have one rep for every ten members! Share the load and collaborate in a way that is logical for your team.)
7. Always look for ways to **advocate** for, not judge, your members.
8. Keep **confidential** conversations **private**.

Five Expectations

What can your members expect from their Rep?

1. **Maintain confidentiality**
 - Be available and approachable. Meet with members individually as needed. Listen to them, and engage them in developing problem-solving strategies. Members should know they can come to you in confidence.
2. **Communicate**
 - Communicate information. Make sure your members know about opportunities for professional development or advocacy, and other events hosted by SKEA. Also make sure SKEA leadership know about the concerns and opinions of your members.
3. **Problem-Solve**
 - Investigate any concerns or potential problems. Involve your members when issues apply to them. Never accept rumor as fact.
4. **Be knowledgeable**
 - Enforce the contract. Know the contract and follow the process for when a contract is not being followed. Ask for help from SKEA leadership.
5. **Represent**
 - Attend investigative meetings to represent SKEA members in the event of possible disciplinary action. Record accurate notes as thoroughly as possible.

Representative Responsibilities

What happens at Representative Assembly (RA)? What happens after RA?
Do your best to participate and advocate for your members.

At R.A.

Your **purpose** is to **represent your building and its members** to the full RA by **listening, participating, asking questions, passing along concerns, and voting**. Issues may range from the budget, bargaining, district policies, state guidelines, upcoming events for members, and more.

1. Listen to information about upcoming events
2. Listen to updates on topics like bargaining or district policy and provide feedback from your members or school situation
3. Participate! Vote!
 - a. Throughout the RA, you can find Board level directors, members of the Organizing Committee, and other reps who can answer questions or help you bring up concerns if you're not ready to do so on your own yet.

After R.A.

Your **purpose** is to **communicate information back to your members** and also **gather feedback** from them. **Create relationships, find causes for celebration, encourage active participation in SKEA events, and listen to member concerns.**

1. Email members with important information and upcoming events from the RA
 - a. You will receive an email with RA notes from SKEA leadership a few days after RA. You can use these materials if they're helpful!
2. Update bulletin boards with flyers for events and asks (such as feedback, participation in an event, etc.)
3. Hold your ten-minute SKEA meeting at your next staff meeting! Here is a suggestion for how to use that time:
 - a. 2-3 minutes: overview of the RA meeting (important info)
 - b. 3-5 minutes: feedback from members, including concerns, questions, or ideas
 - c. 3-4 minutes: announcements of events, celebrations
4. Meet with your admin to discuss any concerns, share celebrations, and problem solve collaboratively
 - a. Try to meet with your admin regularly, and let your members know that this is a time when you can ask questions or bring concerns anonymously for them.

Be kind to yourself! No one can do it all!

Check out page 5 for suggestions on how to share tasks among representatives at your building!

Monthly Checklists

Effective building reps maintain consistent communication between SKEA and members. Use these checklists to help make that happen!

August & September

- Attend RA
- Create your building's bulletin board
- Present SKEA info at a staff meeting
- Meet with your admin
- Talk to all members face-to-face
- Check in with non-members and potential members
- Update membership information for SKEA
- Update elections for Building Rep as needed

October

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Have you turned in your membership materials?
- Check on your building's conference schedule*

*once during each semester, there will be one 12-hour conference day (outside of those that take place within a normal work day); teachers are entitled to two 30-minute, duty-free meal breaks and one full-length, duty-free prep

Nov. & Dec.

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Have you thought about using your Building Rep or Wellness grant money? **

January

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Check on new hires— they're potential members!

February

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Check in with your probationary members as summative evaluation conferences begin

**SKEA offers grants for \$5 per member in Building Representative funds and \$5 per member in Wellness funds that your team or Reps can choose to use at anytime throughout the year to benefit the members at your site

March

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Remind members to sign their contracts! (usually required before Spring break)

April

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Check on your building's conference schedule*
- Have you thought about using your Building Rep or Wellness** grant money?

May & June

- Attend RA
- Update bulletin board
- Present at a staff mtg
- Meet with your admin
- Host elections for Building Representatives for the next school
- Check on summer training***

***Summer trainings should be scheduled within the first two weeks after school ends or the two weeks prior to returning in August. If they are required, make-up options must be provided for members who are not available during the summer.

Work Together!

Most buildings can have an average of 3 building representatives. Collaborate to share tasks and responsibilities!

This document is a suggestion based on one of our middle school representative teams. Gather with your building reps and make a plan that works best for you and your building.

Rep #1

- Attend monthly RA
- Hold 10 minute meeting back at school with updates

Rep #2

- Send out emails to members (monthly RA updates, announcements and reminders as needed)
- Update SKEA bulletin board throughout the year

Rep #3

- Run rep election
- Track membership and invite new staff to join SKEA

Shared

- Set up and attend regular meetings with admin at your building
- Connect with staff and listen to concerns
- Attend and take notes at meetings with members and their supervisors when asked
- Check in with members who have shared concerns or have had grievances

Collective Action

One important role for Building Representatives is to encourage and recruit participation among SKEA members in your building. We need your members to be present and active in our collective action because we are stronger together. Many hands make light work. The more active our members are, the more strength we bring to bargaining and community advocacy.

- Contact SKEA members to spread information
- Participate in SKEA outreach to the community
- Attend and/or submit testimony to the School Board
- Vote in local elections and participate in local political action

Building Rep. Grant

Each school site's building representatives may apply for a Building Rep grant at any time during the school year. Your site may receive up to **\$/member** in total by the end of the year. The **purpose** of the grant is to **increase member engagement**, recognize member involvement, and otherwise **support Association business** at your school.

Examples:

- Gift cards to raffle at 10 minute SKEA meetings
- Food at an SKEA, social-justice, or other association-oriented event
- Swag or other gifts that unite members

Wellness Grant

Each school site's building representatives may apply for a Wellness grant at any time during the school year. Your site may receive up to **\$5/member** in total by the end of the year. The **purpose** of the grant is to **support member health and well-being**.

Examples:

- A meal at the beginning or end of a year/semester to celebrate togetherness
- Swag or t-shirts that support issues that members believe in
- Coffee cards, gift cards

Building Representatives are responsible for ensuring that these grants, which **come from Member dues**, benefit **the health, well-being, and engagement of Members** in their building.

How do I get reimbursed? Vouchers can be found online, on our website (under Forms & Applications).

Receipts can be scanned and emailed, or mailed direct to the office.

You can use these all at one time or throughout the year, and they may be combined if it is useful!

Member Concerns

When a member brings you a concern, what should you do?

Grievance or Gripe?

A **grievance** is a violation of a collective bargaining agreement. This may include inequitable treatment under the contract, interpretation of the language of the contract, or application of the contract. **If you believe an employee has a grievance, or you're not sure, contact SKEA leadership immediately. Grievances must be processed through SKEA leadership.**

A **complaint** is an allegation by one or more employees that a district policy, practice, or procedure had been violated, or inequitable and/or unfair treatment has occurred that is not covered by the negotiated agreement. **If you believe an employee has a legitimate complaint, or you're not sure, contact SKEA leadership.**

A **gripe** is based on something that one or more members disagree with. It may be important for you to **acknowledge** the gripe simply because your member(s) need you to **listen** to their opinions. It may also be **important for SKEA leaders to know** about for future bargaining or district meetings. It also could be something that you can **problem solve collaboratively** at the building level by working with your admin and leadership team.

Member-to-Member concerns do come up. **Problem-solve internally to the best of your ability.** Communicate directly to the person involved as your first step. Use your professional discretion. We need to stand together. Our strength is in collective voice; an injury to one is an injury to all. **If you need help, communicate with SKEA leadership who can help you access mediation.**

Investigative Meeting

1. A member tells you that they have **received a letter** scheduling an investigative meeting.
2. **Contact the SKEA Leadership and/or Office (503) 364-3397 immediately.** They will help decide whether you will be representing your member in the meeting or someone in SKEA leadership.
3. Before the meeting, **talk with the member.** Advise them to **be honest** and answer questions. Encourage them not to provide extraneous information; **silence is okay.**
4. During the meeting, **take notes.** Record who is present at the meeting. Listen carefully and capture what is said as thoroughly as possible.
 - a. If the meeting addresses a complaint, **a written summary must be provided previously OR at the beginning of the meeting. Ask for time to read** and process the summary if needed.
 - b. You can ask clarifying questions as needed, but your main purpose is to listen and record what is said.

**Investigative meetings are part of our due process.
The purpose is to gain information prior to a decision being made.**

Contract Highlights

As of June 2021, these are some important concepts in our CBA.

Membership, Association Activities, Due Process

- **Membership**
 - Licensed teachers, counselors, nurses, school psychologists, physical and occupational therapists, audiologists, speech language pathologists and social workers are eligible to be members of SKEA. (Article 1. A. 1. a.)
- **Communication**
 - You MAY use interschool mail, school email, and school mailboxes for Association business as long as it is labeled, created and read during non-student-contact time, not political, not strike-related, and does not interfere with normal school operations. (Article I. D. 1.)
- **School facilities**
 - School facilities may be used for SKEA meetings during non-duty hours as long as they do not interfere with school operations. (Article I. D. 2.)
- **Meetings**
 - SKEA is entitled to fifteen (15) minutes once per month to meet with members during non-duty hours AND representatives are allowed to make brief announcements and respond to questions during professional meetings. (Article I. D. 2. a, b.)
- **Representation**
 - Employees have the right to Association representation during any disciplinary or investigative process and cannot be required to discuss anything without counsel. (Article III. A. 2. B. and elsewhere throughout the CBA)

Prep, Inservice Days, Conference Days, etc.

- **Inservice**
 - Employees will be given one full-day or two half-days without required meetings during the inservice days prior to the start of the school year. (Article X. B.)
- **Grading Days**
 - Secondary: the last regular day of duty will be reserved as a grading day. Elementary: the second-to-last full day and half of the last day of duty will be reserved as a grading day. (Article X. C.)
- **Required Summer Trainings**
 - Required summer trainings must be planned and communicated with employees prior to spring break. The staff should be surveyed to determine what days are best for them. These trainings should be scheduled within the first two weeks following the school year or the two weeks prior to the start of school in the fall. All required trainings must include a makeup option if employees cannot attend during the summer. (Article X. F. 1-2.)
- **Conferences (12-hour-days)**
 - Once during each semester, there will be one 12-hour conference day (outside of those that take place within a normal work day); teachers are entitled to two 30-minute, duty-free meal breaks and one full-length (the length of one and a half typical prep periods) prep during these twelve-hour work days. (MOU)
- **Prep**
 - Employee preparation time should be used only by the employee for preparation; the district cannot require that they participate in any meetings or duties during this time without compensating them at their per diem rate. (Article IX. B. 1-4).
 - Elementary: no fewer than 240 minutes during each work week; no fewer than 210 minutes during student-contact time. These minutes must be allocated in blocks of time no shorter than 30 uninterrupted minutes; at least one block must be given each day between student arrival and student dismissal.
 - Secondary: one instructional period (45/48 minutes or one full-length period, whichever is longer).
 - If the length of class time is reduced by assemblies, half-day inservices, or other reasons, teachers' prep times will be reduced proportionally to the reduction in each class period.

Contract Highlights

Continued from page 7

Leaves

- **Sick Leave:** 10 days per school year, balance rolls over to future school years; cannot be denied, not impacted by blackout days; no explanation required for fewer than three consecutive days (at that point, the District can ask you if you want to take a FMLA)
- **Family Illness:** 5 days per school year, does not roll over; cannot be denied, not impacted by blackout days; applies to anyone considered immediate family which is pretty broad; if you run out of Family Illness, you can use your Sick Leave as well (Article VIII. A. 1.)
- **Personal Leave:** 3 days per school year, does not roll over; can't be taken during blackout days; no explanation required (reason: "It's personal."); once-in-a-lifetime leave should not be denied (contact SKEA if you have a concern)
 - **Blackout Days:** The first five and last five student contact days of each school year; the four days prior to winter/spring break; the first day following winter/spring break; and the one day prior to each individual holiday cannot be used for personal leave.
- Leave is part of your contractual rights; please use your leave only as intended.
- **Bereavement, Emergency leave, Legal leave, Military leave, Sabbatical, and Leaves Without Pay** are described on pages 18-20 of the CBA. (Article VIII. A. 2, 4-8 and B. 1-2.)
- **Substitutes:** Leave can be taken in any increment and does NOT have to match sub leave; the District or school has to take care of coverage for your leave needs regardless of whether it matches a half-day or full-day sub.
- Office managers are not your supervisor; they communicate with you to help schedule coverage but are not responsible for investigating or determining leave.

Pay, Advancement, Differentials, Tuition Reimbursement

- **Paychecks:** Encourage members to read their paycheck. Are you being paid at the right rate?
 - <https://salkeiz.k12.or.us/employment-home/salary-schedules/>
- **Smooth Pay:** We work 192 days but are paid "smooth pay" for 12 months; each month, an amount is taken from our paycheck and placed into an escrow account that allows us to be paid in equal installments over breaks including winter and summer.
- **Pay Column Change:** submit completed, qualified course work from a certified institution to the District by September 15th/February 15th. "Hours" on the Salary Schedule equate to Quarter Credits (Semester Credits equate to 1.5 hours).
- **Differentials:** Site-based ELL Facilitators, Bilingual classroom teachers, Special Education instructors, nurses, and SLPs, coaches, and some other positions receive differentials for their positions. See pages 12-13, and the differential tables in the CBA.
- **Tuition Reimbursement:** the District will provide tuition reimbursement/professional development using hourly rates at WOU for up to three undergraduate or 3 graduate hours per fiscal year, up to \$1,000 (within Insight24J: navigate to Human Resources: Employee Benefits: Tuition Reimbursement for instruction; application is on Employee Self-Service).

Benefits

- **Insurance:** The max District insurance contribution for 2020-2021 will be **\$1,375**. If the premium for the plan(s) selected by the employee are greater, the excess will be withheld through monthly payroll deduction. (Article VII. A. 1-2.)
- **PERS:** The District will contribute ("pick-up") the 6% employee contribution to the Public Employees Retirement System for those employees who participate in PERS. (Article VII. B.)
- **EAP:** The District will provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that allows each employee to refer themselves confidentially to the EAP provider. The EAP will include individual and/or family counseling (this includes anyone in your household). They also provide legal consultation, assistance with finding daycare, resources about becoming a foster parent, and much more.

Robert's Rules of Order

Our RA follows Robert's Rules, developed in 1836 as a procedure for efficient meetings.

Basics

The **Chair** is the individual conducting the meeting; usually the President or designee.

The **Agenda** is the “to do” list for the meeting.

It may include:

- Attendance
- Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- Executive Reports (updates)
- Committee Reports
- Treasurer's Report
- New Business
- Adjournment

An **Open Floor** can take place at the beginning of a meeting, and is a good time to bring up new business. It can also take place at the end of a meeting and is a good time to bring up any items for the Good of the Order or of Personal Privilege.

When voting on the **Agenda**, members can choose to follow it **with** or **without flexibility**.

Flexibility allows various parts of the meeting to run longer or shorter than anticipated. It also allows the Chair to change the order of the events in the meeting as needed.

No flexibility requires that each item on the agenda take the length of time predicted on the agenda, in the anticipated order.

Requests to be on the **Agenda** (or have something addressed on the Agenda) should be submitted to the **Chair** five or more days prior to the meeting.

Decision Making

Decisions begin with a **Motion**, made aloud and recorded on a Motion form.

The **Chair** facilitates the order for speaking during debate.

The **maker** of the Motion will be able to explain or **Speak To** their motion before debate begins.

During **debate**, the Chair will take speakers in Favor and speakers Against in alternating order. Debate will go for up to 15 minutes; to continue longer, the Chair will call for a vote to *suspend the rules*. After there are no more in favor or against speakers, the Chair will call for a vote.

Questions are also taken during Debate, and take precedence over anyone speaking in Favor or Against.

At any time during the debate, a participant may call to *Close Debate* which requires a second and a vote.

Some votes require a simple majority to pass, while others require a 2/3rds majority. The **Parliamentarian** or Chair will help determine which one applies.

Motion: “I move to...” or “I move that...”



Second: “I second the motion...”



The Maker of the motion has an opportunity to explain.



Debate:

- Speaking in Favor
- Speaking Against 
- Questions (at any time)
- Point of Order (at any time)

Repeat as needed



Vote: the Chair will call for a vote and lead the process.

Membership

Why and how to talk to new and potential members at your site.

It's a Priority

- **Know** who is in your building: members, potential members, and dropped members. It's always worth it to **check in** with non-members and offer them new opportunities to join, but **be respectful** of their choices.
- As new hires come on board, **introduce yourself**. You're the face of SKEA. Give them an opportunity to become a member and provide support for them as they join your staff.
- Don't forget, **our members include**: teachers, counselors, nurses, school psychologists, physical and occupational therapists, audiologists, speech language pathologists and social workers!

Membership Asks (aka conversations)

- **Use Resources**. Use the SKEA at a Glance, What Membership Means in SKEA, and the Collective Voice flyers to help guide your conversation. Potential members may have never been a part of an union or even know what it is we do. Using those sheets can help introduce who SKEA is and explain some of the benefits of membership.
- **Talk About Money**. Share the dues chart and explain where dues go. Help your potential member make an informed decision.
- **Tell Your Story**. Why are you a member? What have you been proud of your union for?
- **Anticipate Questions**. One of the biggest the issues or questions that potential and even current members will ask about is political action and candidate endorsement.
 - Dues money goes toward political action but not candidates. For example, OEA employs lobbyists who advocate on behalf of public education. Through this advocacy, we have prevented test scores from being tied to our pay and benefits.
 - It may be confusing as SKEA, OEA, and NEA often endorse candidates locally and nationally to guide voting members. All three organizations do this by majority vote among their members. However, ANY money going to candidates come from a political action committee (PAC) which members voluntarily give money to separately from dues dollars.
- **Keep SKEA Up to Date**. Remember, you are the face of SKEA in your buildings. SKEA will keep up-to-date building rosters for your use at any time; however, please know that you may have faster information on new hires than the district provides to SKEA. So you are the key to ensuring building rosters are correct!

Benefits of Membership

- As a member you belong to **SKEA**, the Oregon Education Association (**OEA**), and the National Education Association (**NEA**). Collectively, we are the largest labor union in the U.S.
- Members receive full benefits at all levels:
 - Access to union meetings, workshops, trainings, conferences, and peer mediation
 - Be in the know with up-to-date information regarding your contract, advocacy, and other news
 - Voting privileges – elect leaders, have a voice in contract negotiations and waivers, etc.
 - Full representation – including access to attorneys
 - \$1 million educator civil liability insurance policy
 - Complimentary Life Insurance and access to travel and other discounts
 - Advocacy on your behalf at the local, state, and national level
 - And more!