



PFT Building Representative Membership/Education Outreach Rap

This rap includes lots of questions and information—you won't get through them all. Conversations will take many shapes, some predictable, some not. Use this as a guide to help with your conversations!

Intro Statement/Questions

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm the PFT Building Representative here at [school]. How are you doing? I wanted to introduce myself to new staff and share some important updates about our union, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers.

- How familiar are you with the work of our union? [LISTEN]

Give a Quick Overview of the PFT

- Our union represents Philly's public school teachers and school staff (*librarians, school nurses, counselors, psychologists and social workers, secretaries, paraprofessionals, classroom assistants, non-teaching assistants, supportive services assistants, Head Start and Bright Futures teachers and staff, food service managers and professional technical employees*).
- The PFT fights every day to make sure we—and our students—have the best teaching and learning environment.
 - When the District wanted us to take pay cuts and pay ridiculous amounts for healthcare benefits, the PFT negotiated increases for educators.
 - The PFT Health & Welfare Fund provides top-notch professional development where you can earn Act 48 credits.
 - The PFT has helped to make our school building conditions a top priority and has forced the District to be more proactive about making repairs and improvements.
 - We also led the fight to end state control of our schools—we have a local board today because of activism from PFT members.

JANUS – Loss of Fair Share Fees

- As you may know there has been a real organized effort to weaken public education. Have you heard of the supreme court case *Janus v. AFSCME*?
- Prior to *Janus v. AFSCME*, teachers and staff who were not members of our union would pay an agency fee that went towards bargaining and enforcing our contract.
- In June, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff (Janus), which will make it difficult for unions like PFT to collect these fees and weaken the union's ability to do its most fundamental work.
- This case was a direct attack on public labor unions which include educator unions.

- Now, only educators who have physically signed a membership form would be paying dues to the union.
- Under this ruling, the PFT would still be required to represent *every educator*, even though only some of them would be paying membership dues. This is a huge blow to our ability to act collectively.
 - Supreme Court rulings are immediately enforceable. But the PFT may not feel the full impact of the Court’s decision right away—but imagine what it will be like in 2020 when our current contract expires.
- Janus v. AFSCME was one of many billionaire-backed efforts to deprive workers of the ability to pull together and bargain collectively to improve their working conditions.
- Fortunately, we have a plan to reach out to all educators and prepare for what’s to come.
- **The strength of our union is in our members.** To keep our power, we must act now to defend our union rights.
- We have been successful because a vast majority (over 95%) of our teachers and school employees are full dues-paying members.
 - If a strong majority of Philly’s educators continue to be *full members* of the union, the District will be forced to listen to our demands at the table and beyond.

Signing up Potential members

- Have you signed up to be a PFT member?
- *If they haven’t signed up yet:* Will you become a member of our union?
 - **If they say “yes”:** Great, you can fill out the form right here. [*Hand them the membership form*]
 - Can you think of any other colleagues who might also like to discuss these issues?
 - **If they say “no”:** What’s your hesitation? What is holding you back? Can you say more about that? [*Listen, discuss, and then ask again; If he/she doesn’t sign on the spot, say you’ll follow up by email or phone, and write that on the contact sheet.*]
 - By joining, you support not only this union but your profession. A good union contract in the School District of Philadelphia raises the standard for educators nationally.
 - And the fewer dues-paying members we have, the more difficult it is for the PFT to provide you with all of the workplace protections and benefits we currently enjoy.
 - The first step to full union participation is to sign a membership form.

Closing

- Thanks for sharing your thoughts. [*REMIND OF ANY UPCOMING PFT MEETINGS, BUILDING MEETINGS, ETC*]