



EXERCISE: WHY WE NEED LEADERS TO ORGANIZE

Let's start out by imagining that Walking Path HS has just learned that the district announced it has eliminated the HS school librarian positions, and laid off the two librarians, one 20-year educator and the other is your building rep. You have until the end of the day to get the word out about a sticker in support of the Library for High Schools campaign beginning tomorrow morning. You want every member to be wearing a sticker at the start of and throughout the day of action. Because people can feel intimidated about taking action or confused about the issue, it's best to hand out the stickers in person, not just leave them in a mailbox or lounge. It's important for the union to explain the issue and answer questions before the principal or administration has a chance to get out their side of the story. Use the following questions to make a plan for your sticker day.

- **Total number of people** you want wearing the sticker: _____
- **How many departments?** Can you cover them all? Who moves around the worksite and can reach other departments?
- **How many start times** are there? Who can get stickers to teachers and school employees based on each start time?
- **Where's the best place** to reach people before they start work? Where are all the entrances?
- Are there groups of workers who rotate schools and don't **come in everyday?** Who can reach them?
- Can you get a sticker onto **everyone** by yourself, or with your current group of building reps?

If not, that's why we need to map and chart our school, then recruit enough leaders to reach every teacher and school employee!





EXERCISE: IDENTIFYING LEADERS

Background:

You are a the UniServ Director for Walking Path High School, and are trying to restart the school site leadership committee. This committee works closely with the building administration on solving work site problems around schedules, curriculum, and contract maintenance. The committee used to have 10 members, but hasn't been meeting for awhile. You would like to recruit some new leaders to the committee.

Instructions:

Read the profiles of the contacts you make and the information they share with you. You have no more than 15 minutes to determine who you think you want to recruit as a leader. Develop consensus in your group about who are the best prospects to recruit. Rate the three best prospects (1 = the best).

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Who is the worst possible choice to build the union? _____

Contact 1

Brenda Hammond

Time at school: 15 years

Issues: After 14 years teaching 12th grade, the principal moved her to 9th grade with no explanation. She is worried she's being pushed out.

I don't know who people look up to. It's not me. Nobody cares how I feel. I just organize the showers and birthday parties.

Sure, I have a list of everyone's numbers. I don't mind sharing it with you.

I'm just waiting for a better opportunity to come along, then I'm leaving. I can't afford to make it look like I'm making trouble.



You should talk to Francis Powers. She's a real leader, although she has some screwy ideas.

Sally Rivera is a real fighter, but sometimes she just fights for herself. Sally is one of the younger teachers. She likes to party a lot. I really respect Paula Harris.



Contact 2 Sally Rivera

Time at school: 4 years

Issues: Not enough prep time and teachers have no voice.

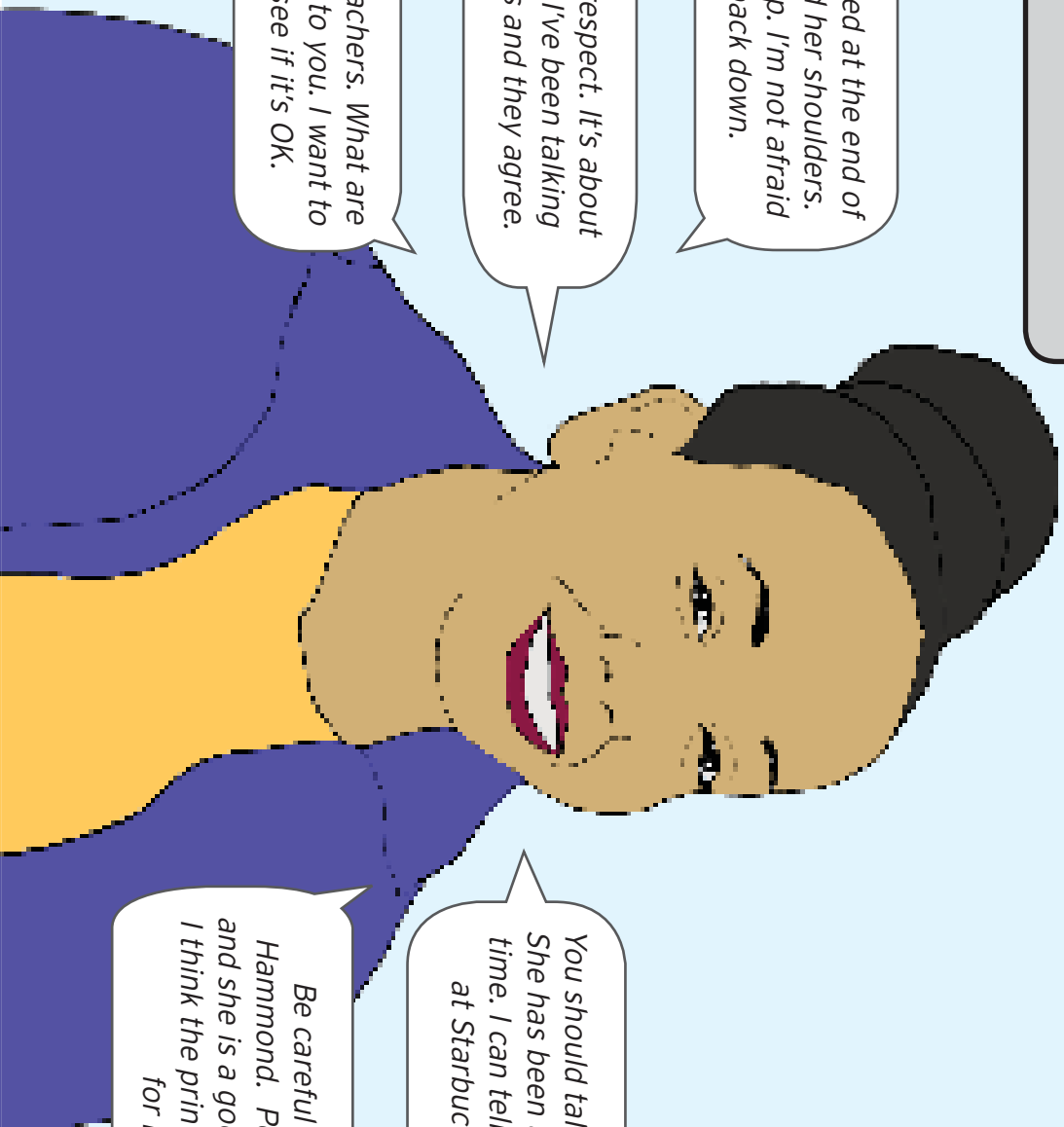
I told the principal I'm exhausted at the end of the day and she just shrugged her shoulders. I'll tell you one thing, I'm fed up. I'm not afraid to speak up and I won't back down.

We need power and we need respect. It's about time someone listened to us. I've been talking to some of the other teachers and they agree.

I mainly talk to the younger teachers. What are their names? Let me get back to you. I want to check with them first and see if it's OK.

You should talk to Evie Winters. She has been around for a long time. I can tell her to meet you at Starbucks after work.

Be careful of Brenda Hammond. People like her and she is a good teacher, but I think the principal has plans for her.



Contact 3 Eve Winters

Time at school: 12 years

Issues: The workload is too high.

They promised me an assistant principal position. I'm not getting involved until I know if I am going to get my promotion.

I'm not saying anything or doing anything until then. If it goes to one of their pets, I'll be mad as hell.

Brenda Hammond is a great teacher, but a little shy. Powers is a great gal. A little nutty, but people follow her.



The younger women seem to stick together. They party a lot and Sally Rivera is their ringleader.

Everyone respects Paula Harris. She was teacher of the year last year. You should see Helen Rockwell. She speaks her mind.



Contact 4

Francis Powers

Time at school: 8 years

Issues: Pace of work

We're just victims here. The school board doesn't care about us or the students.

Some of these younger folks don't care either. They only care about having fun. Half the time I don't even know what they are talking about. Cindy Thomas is the one young person I do like. She is a real firecracker.

I really don't like Paula Harris, but I do respect her. Rockwell is a loudmouth just like Mary Smith.

Don't bother talking to any of the young teachers. They don't take anything seriously.

Brenda Hammond and Evie Winters would be good leaders. Brenda got the shaft when they moved her to 9th grade. She had been teaching 12th grade for 14 years!



Contact 5

Cindy Thomas

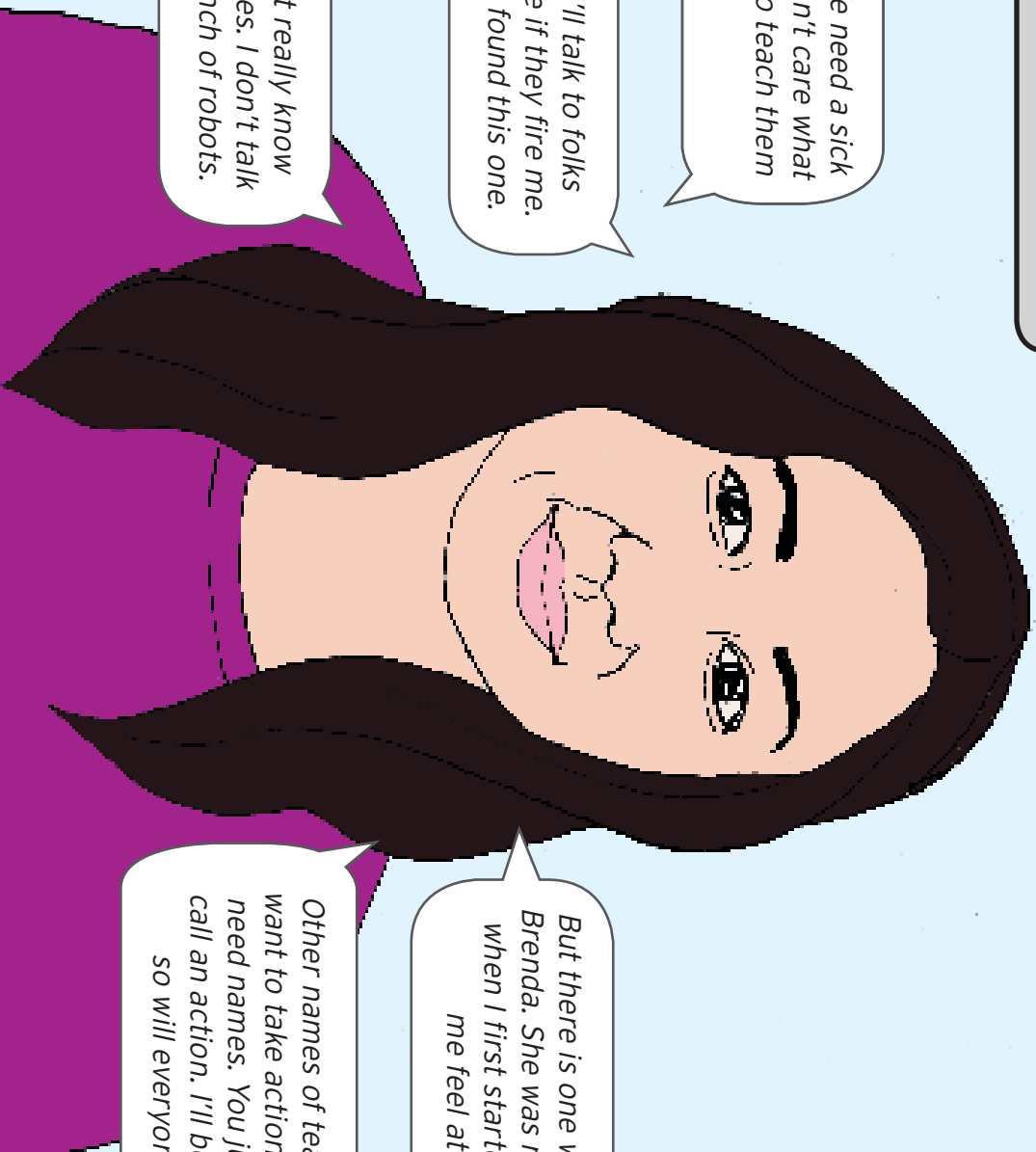
Time at school: 3 months

Issues: Disrespect from the principal.

We need to shake things up. We need a sick out or some sort of action. I don't care what the principal thinks. We need to teach them him a lesson.

Just give me the word and I'll talk to folks about walking out. I don't care if they fire me. I was looking for a job when I found this one.

Who would I talk to? Well, I don't really know their names, I just know their faces. I don't talk to them much. They are all a bunch of robots.



But there is one woman named Brenda. She was real nice to me when I first started. She made me feel at home.

Other names of teachers who want to take action? You don't need names. You just need to call an action. I'll be there and so will everyone else.

