

Organizing One on One Practices for Aspiring Educators



Organizing One-on-One Conversations with Aspiring Educators

Effective organizing means building relationships—one at a time and over time—through structured one-on-one conversations. Organizing conversations are the most effective way to gather information, identify employees' concerns and issues, share factual information, inoculate against other campaigns, move members to action, and ultimately effect positive change and grow membership.

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Purpose of the Organizing Conversation

- Tool for building relationships and understanding self interest
- Listen
 - o To identify issues and concerns of important to Aspiring Educators
 - o Identify leadership and relationships
- Assess Aspiring Educator on a variety of factors and issues
- Move into action

How to Have an Organizing Conversation

Introduction

Who you (organizer) are and why the conversation is important

Ask Questions / Listen

What does the individual or group of individuals study or work? What is it like to work there or attend their college/university? What is good about the higher education institution or job and what is not good? A good organizer uses the 80/20 rule of listening to talking.

Educate

Give factual information to employees on issues, actions, and other pertinent information.

Agitate

Why are things the way they are, and who makes these decisions? How would things be better if you had a voice in making these decisions? What would it mean to you if we solved this problem? How might we solve it?

Inoculate

Provide clear expectations for likely outcomes and messages that will come from the opposition.
Provide factual and evidence-based refutations.

Invitation to Action / Assessment Question (s) – **The Ask**

Move the Aspiring Educator to action:

- Recruit membership/Enroll as a member
- Schedule appointments for organizers to talk with other Aspiring Educators
- Attend a chapter meeting
- Sign a petition or wear a button
- Sit on Aspiring Educators committees or external committees
- Serve as _____ (or other formal or informal position)
- Engage in a political campaign
- ??? The possibilities are limitless...

Discover Connections

Who else should I be talking to? Who do you know that has some good ideas on this issue? Who has been supporting you through this? Whom do you count on for good advice? Can you help me connect with them?

How do you listen for self-interest?

Through one on one conversations. A conversation when you learn about the other person's story.

Helpful Phrases for One-on-One Conversations with Aspiring Educators

Use these phrases to guide meaningful conversations with aspiring educators. Adapt your tone and pacing to build rapport and trust as you learn more about their experiences, challenges, and hopes for the profession.

- “Hi, I’m Renee with the Aspiring Educators chapter. I’m checking in to see how your semester is going.”
- “How did you choose your focus area?”
- “What inspired you to want to be a educator?”
- “What’s one thing you would change about your teacher prep program?”
- “How does [minor frustration they mention] impact your motivation or stress levels?”
- “How does that impact your day-to-day as a student or future educator?”
- “Do you feel your time is being used well in your classes or fieldwork?”
- “Is that pace sustainable for you?”
- “What do you think it will be like when you enter the profession if things don’t change?”
- “Who decides what your program looks like?”
- “Do you think that’s fair?”
- “How has that impacted you or your classmates?”
- “Is what you’re doing now preparing you for the classroom?”
- “What do you know about the Aspiring Educators program and the union?”
- “Help me understand what’s most important to you right now as a future educator.”

Aspiring Educators Relational 1 on 1 Organizing Conversations Scenarios

Each scenario can be used in trios:

- **Organizer:** Practices starting and guiding the one-on-one.
- **Potential Member:** Takes on the persona in the scenario.
- **Observer:** Watches and gives feedback (e.g., Did the organizer listen? Build trust? Make a clear ask?).

1. The Future Teacher Who Needs to Work While Student Teaching

You're talking to a junior education major who recently learned they won't be able to work during their student teaching semester. They are the first in their family to go to college and work part-time to cover rent and food. They are frustrated and worried they'll have to delay graduation or go into more debt.

Organizer's Goal: Connect this issue to a shared problem others are facing, share how the club is organizing around paid student teaching, and invite them to get involved in the campaign or attend an info session.

2. The Skeptical Peer in a Conservative Community

You're paired with someone from a small rural town in Ohio where people are skeptical of anything that sounds political. They're interested in teaching but don't see how aspiring educators union/club can help and have concerns that "organizing" feels too divisive. They've never been to a meeting and assume it's not for them.

Organizer's Goal: Use shared values (e.g., fairness, strong public schools, support for future teachers) to build common ground, explain the club's purpose in non-political terms, and invite them into a safe, welcoming space.

3. “Why Should I Join?” – Membership Recruitment

You’re talking to a fellow education major you’ve seen around campus but haven’t spoken to much. Your Aspiring Educators chapter is trying to grow, and your leadership team has set a goal to double your membership by the end of the semester. You strike up a conversation between classes to see if they might be interested. The student is polite but asks, “What does the Aspiring Educators club actually do?” They say they’re already busy with work and school, and aren’t sure it’s worth joining another student organization.

Organizer’s Goal: Practice explaining the purpose and value of the chapter in clear, relatable terms (e.g., community, professional development, advocacy, access to resources, support systems). Identify what the student cares about, connect it to the club, and make a specific, low-pressure ask—such as attending an event, joining a group chat, or filling out an interest form.

4. The Overwhelmed Transfer Student

You’re meeting a transfer student who just switched into the education program at your university. They’re feeling behind socially and academically and unsure where to find community. They’ve never heard of the Aspiring Educators club and don’t feel very connected to campus yet. They are also nervous about the number of certification tests they’ll have to take.

Organizer’s Goal: Build rapport, introduce the club as a supportive space, and invite them to a welcome event or club meeting.

5. The Natural Leader Everyone Respects

You’re talking with a senior who’s super involved in campus life and respected by both students and faculty. They’re not in the Aspiring Educators club, but they care deeply about creating more inclusive classrooms and are thinking about grad school in education. Others look up to them and often follow their lead.

Organizer’s Goal: Affirm their leadership, share how the club creates change on and off campus, and ask them to help lead a project or co-host an event.

ASPIRING EDUCATORS ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATION TRACKER

Your Name: _____

Campus/Institution: _____

Student Name: _____

Membership Status: ☐ Member ☐ Not a Member

Conversation Prompts:

- What has gone well for you this semester?
- What do you like best about your education program or classes?
- What do you need to feel more prepared to become a teacher?
- What is one thing you would change about your program or campus experience?
- *What is the biggest concern for you right now as a future educator?
- If there was one thing you could change about your experience in your program, what would it be?
- How do you think things will look five years from now if nothing changes?
- Who is trusted and respected among your peers or professors?
- *What factors have prevented you from joining the Aspiring Educators chapter?
- One of the things our union does is advocate for issues like (insert their concern). We'd love to add your voice to our chapter so we can be stronger together.

ASK:

Will you join the Aspiring Educators chapter this year? It's quick and easy.

Additional Questions for Current Members:

- What do you find to be the most valuable aspects of your membership?
- What does our Aspiring Educators chapter do well? What changes would you like to see?
- Have you taken on any leadership roles or activities with the chapter? If not, would you be interested?