



Guilford County Association of Educators <gcaenc@gmail.com>

Labor Day, Labor Unions, and GCAE

1 message

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Newsletter

September 6, 2023

#TroublemakerTidbits:**Labor Day Celebrates Labor Unions!**

We enjoyed the unofficial close of summer on Monday with a day off from work. For many of us, it was a much-needed rest after an exhausting first week of school! You may also have received emails from companies or politicians with labor-themed messages. There were some sales for sure, but I also received an email from a certain politician who is running for NC Labor Commissioner, and this guy was trying to celebrate Labor Day without mentioning labor unions one single time.



There is no Labor Day without labor unions, and the very first Labor Day celebrations were observed with street parades exhibiting local trade and labor organizations. In fact, there are

lots of things we wouldn't have without labor unions, besides just Labor Day. Labor unions, in their heyday, brought us weekends, 8-hour workdays, overtime pay, standardized workplace safety practices, healthcare for workers, and pensions.

Since the 1930s, corporations and wealthy elites have been intentionally and ruthlessly busting labor unions like ours, to the detriment of American workers.

When we unionize and win collective bargaining in our workplaces, our conditions improve. And in education, when our working conditions improve, so do our students' learning conditions.

Here in North Carolina, you might have heard someone say (once or twice) that public school workers can't unionize. The truth is that North Carolina *is* a "right to work" state, which basically reads as "anti-union." Public sector workers like us do not have the right to collective bargaining in our state. But we DO have a union, and our local union is GCAE. We know that we need more power in order to win the schools we and our students need and deserve. That's why we have the goal of growing GCAE into a *strike-ready majority union*. Our power is our people and our labor. [Join your coworkers today.](#)

Sources:

- [History of Labor Day](#)
- [A Proclamation on Labor Day, 2023 \(President Biden\)](#)
- [A Collective Bargain: Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy](#) by Jane McAlevey

For more information, register for NCAE's virtual training: [Learning the Landscape: What is a Labor Union?](#)

How to Plug In & Build YOUR Union, GCAE:

The most important things you can do right now to build power are to

- 1.) get involved with your Building Team (come to Building Team Training!) and
- 2.) bring your coworkers with you to our very first Mass Meeting of the year!

We've known it for a while now, but it needs to be said: no one is coming to save us but us. It's time to fight power with power, and that's what we are building. *This all starts at the building level, with a strong Building Leader and a Building Team.*

- Are you the Building Leader? Building Team Training is for you!
- Do you want to join your Building Leader in building power at your work site? Building Team Training is for you!

- Are you unsure who your Building Leader is or how to get started in your building, or even just curious about it? Building Team Training is for you!

[Plan to attend on September 18.](#) And we're serious: bring a coworker with you!

And plan to attend the very first **Mass Meeting** of the school year THIS **Thursday, September 14, at Smith High School!** RSVP for yourself, and ask your coworkers to come with you. We're going to feed you good food, take care of your kids, and get you gassed up for a great year of building the collective power needed to win the schools that you, your coworkers, and your students deserve! We win what we're willing to fight for, so bring a ton of coworkers with you to wrap up our #HotUnionSummer and kick off our #PublicSchoolPower school year! ([Register now](#) so we have enough food and know who is going to need childcare!)

THURS, SEPT 14, 5:30-7:30 pm, Smith HS	First GCAE Mass Meeting of the School Year! Dinner and childcare provided!	Register
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MON, SEPT 18, 5:30-7:00 pm, virtual	GCAE Building Team Training, Option 2 All Building Leaders and Building Team members, please plan to attend. Training is required in order to be an official GCAE Building Leader for the 23-24 school year.	Register
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Ways to Plug In with NCAE:

GCAE is the local affiliate of our state union, NCAE. The following opportunities are available for all NCAE members ready to learn one more thing, take one more step, or dig just a little bit deeper.

- **NCAE BL Training Session 1:** Although this series is geared mostly towards smaller locals, GCAE members are welcome to attend if you'd like to brush up on some organizing skills. *(Please note that all GCAE Building Leaders should sign up for GCAE Building Team Training above.)*
 - Thursday, Sept 7, 6:00-8:00 PM, virtual
 - Register: <https://link.ncae.org/Building-Leader-Training>
- **NCAE Local Strength Cohort Meeting:** Available to Building Teams who want to work on some leader identification and development.
 - Monday, Sept 11, 6:00-8:00 PM, virtual
 - Register: <http://link.ncae.org/Local-Strength-Cohort>

- **From Bills to Advocacy: NCAE's Legislative Update and Advocacy Skills Trainings**
 - Wednesday, Sept 13, 6:00-7:15 PM, virtual
 - Register: <https://www.mobilize.us/ncae/event/572162/>
 - **NCAE Region 4 BL Training:** Learn about what's been happening in the NCGA, improve your membership recruitment skills, and learn more about professional development opportunities offered by NCAE. Lunch and childcare will be provided. *(Please note that Region 4 Building Leader Training does not replace GCAE Building Team Training as the requirement for Building Leaders. All GCAE Building Leaders should sign up for GCAE Building Team Training above and are most welcome to attend Region 4 Building Leader Training as well.)*
 - Saturday, Sept 23, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, Elon
 - Register: <https://link.ncae.org/R4-Building-Leader-Training>
 - **Learning the Landscape: What is a Labor Union?:** Learn why we need labor unions, a brief history of labor unions, and the current conditions causing an upsurge in labor union activity.
 - Monday, Sept 25, 6:00-7:30 PM, virtual
 - [Register](#)
 - **NCAE Members and Statewide Candidates Meet-and-Greet**
 - Friday, Sept 29, 6:00-7:30 PM, Raleigh
 - [Register](#)
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