

Talking to Educational Support Personnel about membership - Should they? Shouldn't they? What's in it for them?

Educational Support Personnel (ESP) do not have the extensive system of laws regarding security of their employment as do teachers. They are, in essence, employees at will – will of the administration and school board, that is. As such they are extremely vulnerable to changes in politics, personal whims, family connections, and staying “on the good side” of their employers. Often times they are afraid to join the Association because of subtle or even overt intimidation.

So why would an ESP join the Association and what can you tell them when they want to know, “What’s in it for me?” There is a special booklet just for ESP. You have a copy of it and you should make sure each of your ESP members have one. Most any question you may encounter is probably answered in this booklet. If not, call me.

The NEA and VEA dues for full-time ESP are about one-half the amount for teachers. Part-time ESP, such as bus drivers or lunch duty cafeteria aides, are about one-half the amount for full-time ESP.

ESP members have all the rights and privileges of membership in the Association. They are entitled to the same support and services from the local, the VEA/NEA, and UniServ as any other member. They receive newsletters, journals, and other information from the Association. They should be notified of any meetings of the Association whether it’s a building level meeting or NEA Convention. They should be given the opportunity to run for any office and vote in any election.