

ABC Federation of Teachers

2023-2026 Strategic Plan



Rationale

The ABC Federation of Teachers is a strong union representing the voices of teachers and nurses. We use innovative structures that empower the ABCFT Membership through well-established communication systems that enhance organizational capacity, political activism, membership communication, and tools for labor-management engagement. The strength of ABCFT has always been its ability to educate, inform, and advocate for its membership promptly about issues that are important to its members. In addition, the ABC Federation of Teachers provides leadership development opportunities for its members to promote teacher voice and activation.

This Strategic Plan aims to provide organizational transparency, fostering a clear vision for the future while nurturing a legacy of shared values. ABCFT leadership will continue to grow the union's capacity through communication structures and opportunities for members to become more involved in union activities. We are committed to the collective advocacy that addresses the ever-changing needs of our members, exhibiting a willingness to change and evolve as necessary to meet these dynamic challenges.

The public education system in the United States is in a state of crisis for social and financial reasons. Decades of financial disinvestment in our nation's children have created a hostile learning environment for our students, and the institution of public education is under siege; furthermore, those forces have

leveled coordinated attacks that undermine labor unions and weaken union membership in attempts to minimize the voices of educators. Students and teachers have been overwhelmed with standardized testing, social-emotional concerns, post-pandemic effects, and a continual threat of school shootings and violence.

The ABC Federation of Teachers works with its members, administrators, and the ABC community to address collaborative ways to combat divisive attacks on public education and the financial challenges that impact our community schools. We also oppose the concept of book bannings. These cultural wars limit freedom of expression and eclectic approaches to academic freedom, attack on student privacy, the demonizing of inclusive curriculum, and all ideas or movements designed to erode the foundations of democracy and public schools.

ABC Federation of Teachers' Mission Statement



The ABC Federation of Teachers' mission is to protect and enhance the rights, working conditions, compensation, and personal well-being of those it represents to promote a safe and healthy environment where teachers can teach and students can learn.

The ABCFT Strategic Plan helps the organization maintain its goals and focus on issues that most impact ABCFT membership and the students it serves.

Process

Effective organizations must have strategic plans that help provide a historical record of organizational priorities. The 2023 ABCFT Strategic Plan marks the fourth iteration of a plan that ABCFT leadership has developed since 2011. A strategic plan aims to determine organizational priorities, thereby guiding actionable steps.

The ABCFT leadership and site representatives have engaged the membership in face-to-face conversations to collect data on the most valuable services. The ABCFT leadership strongly believes that fostering member-to-member centered and collaborative decision-making processes is the most effective method for our union to serve our membership. Additionally, ABCFT leadership and the negotiating team use various tools: membership surveys, site visits, virtual chats, and small group meetings to gain additional information and membership priorities.

In October 2023, the ABCFT Executive Board convened to revise the ABCFT Strategic Plan. In that meeting, the ABCFT leadership examined the 2020-2023 ABCFT Strategic Plan and discussed the evolving needs of the membership. In January 2024, the ABCFT Site Representatives and the membership had an opportunity to provide input and revisions to the Strategic Plan. After consideration and an opportunity for meaningful input from the site representative council and the membership, the

strategic plan will have final approval by February 2024. The strategic plan will then be distributed to the ABCFT membership.

ABCFT Strategic Priorities and Action Plans

1. **Compensation and Benefits** - The primary function of our union is to ensure competitive compensation packages for members. Negotiating for salary and benefits remains a top priority, as we recognize and value our members' hard work and dedication. In 1995, ABCFT compensation and benefits ranked in the lowest quartile (25%) for pay and benefits for LA County. In 1998, ABCFT and ABCUSD committed to ensuring that the best way to attract and retain teachers/nurses/SLPs was to maintain a salary and benefits package in the top quartile for pay (75%+) in Los Angeles County. In 2022-2023, ABCFT continued to explore innovative ways to attract and retain employees by creating separate salary schedules that included substantial increases in compensation for Special Education, CTE, Child Development, and Speech and Language Pathologists teachers. ABCFT is currently in the top quartile of unified school districts for the following: benefits, average salary, total compensation of salary, and benefits in Los Angeles County.

Action Plan

1. Continue to negotiate to maintain a total compensation package that is within the top quartile for pay in Los Angeles County.
 2. Continue to negotiate for the top quartile of salary schedules in Los Angeles County.
 3. Maintain a benefits package that is in the top quartile in Los Angeles County.
 - 3.1. Maintain contract language that ensures an adjustable cap that provides a free family plan for Kaiser.
 - 3.2. Work to avoid a provider monopoly by ensuring a competitive environment for healthcare providers so that members can access the most cost-effective health choices. Members can access choices that fit their healthcare needs.
 4. Continue collaborating with CFT and State organizations to advocate for increasing revenue for California public schools.
2. **Working/Learning Conditions** - Learning conditions have a significant impact on the success of our students. To succeed, teachers/nurses must have the best working environments, professional development training, curricular materials, access to technology, and student support services. In addition, ABCFT advocates for safe, inclusive, and innovative classrooms where teachers and all students have the tools and support to be academically successful and socially and emotionally healthy.

Action Plan

1. Support equitable practices and policies that create beneficial learning conditions for all students.

2. Promote social and emotional learning as a foundation for students and teachers.
 - 2.1. Advocate for funding and resources that elevate behavioral health.
 - 2.2. Professional development for Teachers/Nurses.
 - 2.3. Provide teachers and students with the support and resources for behavioral health.
3. Continue to advocate for a Nurse/student ratio of 1 to 750, reduce site assignments to one per nurse, and have adequate working environments that support their work i.e, hearing tests in noisy environments.
4. Continue to advocate for Speech and Language Pathologists' caseloads, working conditions, and the number of sites they service.
5. Maintain class sizes and contract language that provides members with clearly defined maximums. Continue to advocate for smaller class sizes and reasonable teacher/student ratios that reflect the student populations and their developmental skills.
6. Continue to advocate for increased academic (curriculum, grading policies) freedom.
7. Work with the district to create a professional development schedule and criteria that are based on teacher feedback/needs specific to their sites and programs.
8. Meet regularly with constitute groups representing programs, grade levels, or school sites to understand member worksite/program challenges and to share best practices.
9. Continue to advocate for teachers' voices in the choice of curricular materials as well as to supplement those materials with other materials of their choosing.
10. Continue to advocate for all teachers to have adequate curricular resources, technology, teaching tools, furniture, and supplementary materials necessary to deliver the curriculum effectively. As well as addressing the timeliness of delivery of materials, furniture, and technology replacement.
11. Develop contract language that supports teachers during grade level changes and room relocation: advocate for language; elimination of combination classes.
12. Enforce the number of full-time FTE (Full Time Equivalent) as the contract outlines.
13. Develop contract language that protects permanent FTE positions(Full-Time Equivalent) while allowing dual enrollment sections.
14. Develop contract language delineating site-specific adjunct duties' needs that is commensurate with staff capacity.

3. **Recruit and Retain ABCFT Leadership Capacity** - Research shows that organizations that invest in leadership development perform better than those that do not invest. Union investment in training members is a way to promote best practices and maintain organizational strength. Investment in leadership training through coaching and membership enhances ABCFT's capacity to deliver critical support and services to its members. Leadership training will help ABCFT make better-informed decisions and ensure the organization's long-term success and stability.

1. Continue to maintain and expand leadership training opportunities for ABCFT members.

Action Plan

1. Continue to hold monthly ABCFT Site Representative meetings and regular bi-weekly ABCFT Executive Board meetings.
2. Continue to train ABCFT site representatives
 - a. Two trainings in August.
 - b. Provide timely contractual rep training during Rep Council meetings.
3. Continue to hold ABCFT Executive Board study sessions/retreats before the new academic year after the Executive Board elections.
4. Continue to participate and expand the ABCFT Teacher Leaders Program.
5. Continue to grow ABCFT Professional Learning Opportunities for membership.
6. Participate in CFT Summer School sessions.
7. Participate in CFT Lobby Days.
8. Hold a yearly leadership retreat for the ABCFT Executive Board.
 - 8.1 Maintain and adjust the ABCFT Strategic Plan as needed.
 - 8.2 Develop yearly priorities and ABCFT action plan.
9. Continue to send delegates to the CFT and AFT conventions.

2. Teacher Leaders Program as a communication structure and capacity builder.

Action Plan

1. Continue to apply with AFT for and facilitate the ABCFT Teacher Leaders Program on a yearly basis.
 2. Continue to utilize alumni teacher leaders as co-facilitators.
 3. Continue to move past teacher leaders into positions within the union.
 4. Continue to have a line item budget supporting the Teacher Leaders Program.
 5. Continue sending teacher leaders to CFT Lobby Days in Sacramento to learn how to advocate for educational issues.
 6. Teacher Leader participants update membership via *YOUNIONnews* on their research.
4. **Effective Communication Structures** - Information gathered from members and through labor-management engagement with administrators is critical to keeping members current about the educational profession and the local impact on their classrooms. ABCFT is committed to the democratic practice of organizational transparency and collective decision-making. Effective and consistent communication structures ensure a well-informed membership to make informed decisions about policies and organizational direction of the ABC Federation of Teachers.

Action Plan

1. Continue to deliver weekly YOUnionnews updates to ABCFT members.

Action Plan

- 1.1. Increase the number of YOUnionnews contributors to highlight member work and action.
- 1.2. Get regular feedback from members about the direction and content of the YOUnionnews.
- 1.3. Continue to use negotiating surveys, climate surveys, health benefit surveys, and internal union surveys to collect and analyze the needs and conditions of members conditions.
- 1.4. Continue to provide regular contract clarification and negotiating updates.
- 1.5. Continue updates for the Teacher Leaders Program ABCFT leadership reports.
- 1.6. Continue posting site representative meeting notes for membership access.
- 1.7. Continue monthly curriculum updates from academic service liaisons.

2. Continue to provide ABCFT Site Representatives with communication opportunities.

Action Plan

- 2.1. Continue to host Focus Group discussions for job-like networking at least four times a year, with at least two of those meetings being held in conjunction with their site/program supervisors.
- 2.2. Continue an annual PAL Retreat training for site representatives.
- 2.3. Continue with monthly talking points for union meeting discussions.
- 2.4. Look at new ways to expand and add interest to the talking points.
- 2.5. Get feedback from site representatives about what information they need in their talking points.
- 2.6. Continue to share important documents, such as monthly Rep Council meetings on Google Shared Drive with all Reps, Alternates, and Executive Council.
- 2.7. Create and update digital union flyers and FAQs with hyperlinks.
- 2.8. Provide support for site reps to maintain YOUnion information boards.

3. Continue with reports from academic service and district liaisons at ABCFT site representative meetings.

Action Plan

- 3.1. Expand the information in the academic services report to include input from TOSAs and Child Development.
- 3.2. Continue to have liaisons share their meeting notes with ABCFT so that members get monthly academic service updates.
- 3.3. Continue to host PAL Advance in collaboration with the district academic partners for curricular and professional development training.
 - 3.3.1. Work with the PAL Council to facilitate both PAL Advance and Focus Group meetings.
 - 3.3.2. Continue to have administrative partners do informational discussions at ABCFT Rep Council meetings.

4. Continue to provide opportunities for program/site representatives to join leadership during site/program visits.

Action Plan

- 4.1. Continue written documentation by the ABCFT leadership of site/program visitations.
 - 4.1.1. Continue sharing the documents with the site reps, negotiation team, E-Board, and, as appropriate, PAL liaisons.
- 4.2. Continue to get feedback from site representatives about what could make site/program visits more productive.

5. Continue to provide surveys of the membership and site representatives that help to provide teachers' voices in decision-making.

Action Plan

- 5.1. Continue surveying membership for negotiation issues, calendar, and the President's end-of-the-year survey.
- 5.2. Support Reps with the creation of site PAL surveys.

6. Continue to build transparency and communication structures that enable the ABCFT Executive Board to make more informed decisions.

Action Plan

- 6.1. Continue to hold multiple learning session meetings where the Executive Board is made aware of surveys, negotiating updates, COPE activity, PAL Council activities, etc.
- 6.2. Continue to facilitate and conduct site/program visitations, giving appropriate Eboard members the opportunity to participate.

- 6.3. Continue to have Executive Board members be focus group liaisons for sites/programs during Rep Councils.
- 6.4. Continue to have Executive Board retreats to update and evaluate union priorities.

7. Increase communication and interaction with District committee representatives and the PASS program.

Action Plan

- 7.1. Evaluate district committee representatives and assign new representatives.
- 7.2. Begin training of district committee representatives.
- 7.3. Use shared Google folders to share notes.
- 7.4. Create a way to communicate input back to committee representatives.

8. Continue to build regular meetings/discussions with ABC School Board Members and District Superintendent.

Action Plan

- 8.1. Continue regular communication with the ABC School Board President.
- 8.2. Continue regular communication/meetings with the ABC School District Superintendent.

9. Build communication structures with ABC Community organizations.

Action Plan

- 9.1. Meet regularly with site parent organizations.

5. **Labor Management Structures** - The critical alliance between administration and labor establishes a collaborative culture that amplifies the voices of teachers and nurses across the entire school district. The Partnership between Administration and Labor is a vital element in creating a culture of collaboration that elevates educator voices at all levels of the school district. The ABC Federation of Teachers and the ABC Unified School District have been building a PAL culture and structures for over twenty years, and we expect no district decision will be made without a union voice. Research and our own practices have illustrated that effective organizational partnerships improve the educational quality of our instruction, expand union representative roles, and ensure educator voice and decision-making.

Action Plan

1. Continue monthly meetings between site representative(s) and site/program administrator(s).

- 1.1. Support contractual language of monthly PAL meetings.
2. Continue weekly meetings between the ABCFT President and the ABCUSD Superintendent.
3. Continue Quarterly PAL Council Meetings.
 - 3.1. Continue PAL Retreat planning.
 - 3.2. Continue oversight of all PAL partnerships' status, development, and support.
 - 3.3. PAL Survey communication and oversight.
4. Continued meetings between Elementary and Secondary Directors and ABCFT liaisons.
5. Continued calendared meetings with Human Resources, Fiscal Services, School Services, IT, Special Education, Child Development, Special Programs, Communications Officer, and Equity Officer.
6. Continue to have ABCFT liaisons with academic service supervisors to provide teachers' voices.
 - 6.1. Work with Academic Services TOSAs on curricular, professional development, and academic service changes.
7. Continue to provide access to district and site administrators during ABCFT Site Representative meetings.
 - 7.1. PAL Retreat
 - 7.2. Focus group meetings with principals at Site Representative meetings.
 - 7.3. Share Curriculum and Classroom PAL updates at Site Representative meetings.
8. Continue regular meetings with ABCUSD labor siblings.

6. **Member Outreach** - Member engagement through leadership opportunities, professional development, and political action are dynamic ways to build the strength of an organization. ABCFT is committed to addressing the needs and interests of the membership as a way to support and engage the members. ABCFT is an educational community focused on providing opportunities for members to participate in leadership training, exchange best practices, and engage in political dialogue. We strive to promote a union culture committed to embracing diversity and member voices. The goal of membership outreach is to grow the capacity and relevance of the YOUnion as an educational component.

Action Plan

1. Union 101 for Members and Site Representatives
 - 1.1. Educate members to promote a union identity.
 - 1.2. Know Your Contract is designed to highlight contractual language, interpretations, and enforcement.
 - 1.2.1. YOUnionews

- 1.2.2. Mini-workshops supporting the work of the union.
 - 1.3. FRISK training
- 2. Create a committee that will explore union sponsored professional learning opportunities.
 - 2.1. Wellness workshops
 - 2.2. Curriculum workshops
 - 2.3. Utilize Teacher Leaders
 - 2.4. Guest speakers
- 3. CFT workshops
 - 3.1. Debt clinic
- 4. Member Interactions
 - 4.1. YOUnion Socials
 - 4.2. Open House at the Union office
 - 4.3. Special Events/Meet ups
 - 4.4. YOUnion Chat

7. Political Action - ABCFT actively advocates for public education and encourages members to participate in the democratic process. ABCFT has a strong history of political action and educator political activism at the local, state, and national levels. The Committee On Political Education (COPE) uses communication structures and financial resources to elect and cultivate school board members who are strong advocates for public education. The voice of educators in the halls of our legislative offices is critical to the survival and maintenance of public education.

Action Plan

1. Recruit and maintain an active COPE Committee.
 - a. Hold an regular COPE campaign to ensure ABCFT has resources for ABC School Board elections.
 - b. Hold regular COPE committee meetings to assess and plan COPE campaigns and political activities.
2. Recruit, elect, and support ABCFT-endorsed school board candidates.
3. Meet annually with local city officials about education priorities.
4. Participate in CFT legislative lobby events in Sacramento and AFT legislative lobby events in Washington, D.C.
5. Advocate for proper IDEA and Title 1 funding along with CFT and AFT.
6. Fight back against privatization and corporatization of our schools and campuses.
7. Work to pass any legislation or ballot initiative that increases funding for public education.