



What is a Contract Action Team (CAT)?

A CAT is the structure through which you organize your staff to win the best contract possible. The union actions we carry out in our buildings or in the streets need to support the work the bargaining team is doing at the negotiations table. If the board doesn't see and feel our power in our buildings, they will try to take all they can --- let's be honest, they already are! This allows for the work of the union to not just fall on the shoulders of one delegate. After all, the union is all of us, not just those of us in the office or the one brave member who serves as your delegate.

Setting up your committee

ID School Leaders

The CAT should be made up of the leaders in your school. This doesn't only mean the people willing to do the work, but the people who lead groups among your staff. You could have a member who is generally down with the union but isn't the militant activist. Being an activist doesn't mean you're always the best leader. Think about the different groups in your school. Who are the cliques? Who is respected among the para's? The front office staff? Is there the go-to person for the upper grade team? Who organizes the social after school on Friday? The number of CAT team members is based on a suggested 1:10 ratio (one leader for at least every ten members at your school).

Invite school leaders to join the Contract Action Team

Meet individually with the leaders you identified and ask them to join the CAT team. Share with them the responsibilities and expectations of being a member of the CAT.

Meet as a Contract Action Team

Analyze your roster & create a phone tree

Get a copy of your school roster. Is this list right? Are we missing anyone? Do you have any new staffers you have not yet joined CTU? Go through your list and collectively assess each member, are they supportive of the union program? How ready are they to walk out? Will they oppose the union no matter what?

After you have gone through the list, divide the members up into a 1:10 CAT member to CTU member ratio. These are the members each CAT team member will be responsible for reaching out to converse, inform, engage and activate.

Take Action!

Get your CAT team active! As a group, brainstorm some ideas that will activate your CAT. An easy one is to get CTU members to wear red on Friday. Task each CAT member to reach out to their list of contacts, on Friday take a picture! Did it work? Did members wear red? What other fun and creative action can you take?



Possible Contract Action Team Activities

- Speak to everyone on their list about wearing red on a specific Friday and scheduling a solidarity photo to get it going. Remind everyone before that Friday. Don't forget to take the photo and share it with communications@ctulocal1.org!
- Email or text everyone on your list with reminders of important opportunities to be involved or important issues (like important emails from CTU or articles posted on CTU Facebook or Twitter).
- Speak to everyone on their list to ask them to come to a union meeting on the CTU contract demands. At the union meeting, CAT members help the delegate(s) discuss which demands resonate with your members and what actions you could take now to help enforce the contract or elevate the demands that help your school. Ideas include:
 - Adding items to the next PPC.
 - Doing parent outreach with the CTU parent flyer before or after school.
 - Attending an LSC meeting to share your priority contract demands.
 - Doing a walk-in before school. (CAT members can take roles like who is responsible for flyers, signs, snacks, coffee, music, chants, etc.)
 - Organizing a couple of folks to speak at a Board of Education meeting on issues that concern you.
- Speak to everyone on their list about their concerns/issues at the school. Compile the concerns and work with the delegate(s) to organize a union meeting with an agenda that reflect the concerns. Then contact everyone on their list to attend the union meeting. At the union meeting, determine which concerns are top priority, that are widely and deeply felt and winnable. At the meeting, identify some next steps that the CAT and delegate(s) can take to help get relief immediately and make a campaign plan. You can always ask for CTU staff support with this!



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- Plan a staff social and contact everyone on their list to come!
- More advanced ideas include:
 - Organizing a meeting with parents or a local community group on problem issues, like a special education or bilingual education *know your rights* training. Discuss what members and parents agree are top priorities and share them at an LSC meeting or the Board of Education meeting.
 - Organizing a school wide forum for students, parents, and community on what we are fighting for in our contract demands.
 - Organizing a meeting with or a rally at your alderman's or state representative's office on a specific issue, bill, or ordinance. Contact CTU for help identifying issues and responsive or not-so-responsive legislators!
 - Reaching out to nearby schools to organize an action on concerns coming from the network chief. This could include asking CTU staff to help set-up a Network Professional Problems Committee meeting with the actual CPS Network Chief to air concerns.
- Eventually, your CAT team will need to be prepared to become strike leaders if necessary. Eventually, CATs can begin brainstorming roles for each CAT member to take in the event that we go on strike. Some ideas of roles are: attendance keeper, chant leader, snack organizer, sign making team leader, and parent flyer leader, etc.