

# Contract Action Campaign Teach-In Facilitator's Guide:



## Objectives:

- Understand the importance of a contract by examining the rights we currently have that were won in the past.  
(*Why is a contract important?*)
- Identify important improvements in our working conditions that we would like to see in our next contract.  
(*What is a fair contract?*)
- Identify how we can fight as a chapter/union for the contract we deserve.  
(*How do we win the contract we deserve?*)
- Define how our contract affects the communities that we serve.  
(*How does winning a contract benefit our communities?*)

## Presentation

### Slide 2: Opening Discussion (2 min)

Which current contractual right is most important to you? Why?

**Teacher's notes:** Display this question on the board. Have participants think for a few minutes about the current contractual right that is most important to them. \*If someone has trouble thinking of one, that's okay.

Here are some sample rights.

- Duty-free lunch
- Prep time
- No routinized lesson plan collection
- Shortage area pay
- Paid coverages
- Lesson format choice
- Cumulative Absence Reserve (CAR) days
- Grievances
- Salary differentials

### Slide 3: Share out (3 min)

Have people volunteer and share their most important rights. Chart out their responses. Push people to think of rights for all titles, not just teachers.

### Slide 4: Consider (2 min)

After sharing the rights, ask: How do you think we got these rights?

**Teacher's notes:** Explain that each of these rights are rights we decided were important, fought for, and won. These rights are the results of mobilization and action.

### Slide 5: Small group brainstorm (5 min)

What rights do you think need to be negotiated in the upcoming contract that will have a positive impact on your work?

**Teacher's notes:** If in person, break into small groups. If virtual, have people come up with some ideas on their own before typing into the chat. Then use the waterfall method, where after a few minutes, everyone types their responses at once.

It's important to make sure people understand that there is no guarantee that any specific demands that are prioritized or discussed in your teach-in will be achieved in our contract negotiations. However, speaking broadly about why these topics are important to us in a real world context is key to understanding how our contract fight connects to the needs of our members, students and communities.

## Slide 6: Whole group share out (5 min)

Share and chart the responses.

Create a chart with the answers.

**Teacher's notes:** If members respond to rights that only apply to teachers, push their thinking to consider other job titles. As part of the share out, show the survey categories. Explain that these are some of the topics that were listed in the all-member survey last May in which educators identified their priorities. Notice where the rights that are shared out fit under topics from the survey.

Here are some topics that were listed in the all-member contract survey:

- Compensation and wages
- Leaves
- Contract enforcement — e.g., paperwork reduction, special ed compliance, etc.
- Work environment and conditions — e.g., air conditioning, workspace, health and safety, etc.
- Staffing
- Technology access and support
- Professional learning

We have a variety of wants and needs. We can't get everything that we want for everyone. But we have overlaps, and there are common threads. How do we get what we need?

## Slide 7: Infographic: How does the UFT develop its demands? (3 min)

**Teacher's notes:** While showing the graphic, talk through the steps of developing demands.

**Instructor's note:** This is a good time to explain that the discussions that just took place in this teach-in around what we need as a profession have a direct parallel to how the demands have been developed, ie. the all-member survey, subcommittee meetings, etc.

**Segue:** We formulate demands, present them to the city. But how do we put the pressure on the city to make sure we are taken seriously? We take action.

## Slide 8: Whole group brainstorm (5-10 min)

How do we fight for a fair contract?

When negotiating a contract, we know that in addition to the bargaining process, we also need to be prepared to take action. What are you willing to do to fight for the contract we deserve? Brainstorm together different ways to mobilize during this contract fight as a union, as a chapter, and as an individual.

## Slide 9: Going further (5 min)

How does the quality of our contract affect the communities we serve?

**Teacher's notes:** Discuss this briefly as a chapter.

**Optional activity:** We need to make sure that the importance of our contract is felt inside our communities. Have people discuss ways that UFT members winning a contract we deserve will have a positive impact on our communities. If possible, see if anyone would be willing to make a poster or other visual that displays the message of how our contract affects our communities. Post these visuals on social media, tagging us at the UFT, and we will help to spread the word in our social media campaign.

## Slide 10: Padlet Post

Create your school or work site's post for the district padlet, which can be found under your District number in the google document linked from the presentation.

**Teacher's notes:** Your padlet should express why you believe we need a fair contract now, and what actions your chapter will pledge to take to fight for a contract.

## Slide 11: Make it public

**Teacher's notes:** Decide on a place to hang the Pledge in your school for all members to sign. Aim for 100% sign rate! Send pics of signed pledge to the UFT for our social media campaign.

## Slide 12: Optional quote for discussion: Ask someone to read this aloud:

“At the banquet table of nature, there are no reserved seats. You get what you can take, and you keep what you can hold. If you can't take anything, you won't get anything and if you can't hold anything, you won't keep anything. And you can't take anything without organization.”

— **A. Philip Randolph**, trade unionist who organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925 and directed the 1963 March on Washington, in which Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech