

Nomination statement:

Carey Obye

Organized Teachers = Better Working Conditions

The teachers I know in Lawrence Township inspire me to think about what's possible if we find new ways to fight for our rights. If you elect me to the position of VP of Organizing and Relations, my number one goal is to work with you to build up our strength as a union in Lawrence Township. Whether this is at the building or district level we are the labor needed for each and every classroom, so we should have real decision making power. Our teacher's voices can't be ignored since we are the solution. We have what it takes to make change across our district if we use the right strategies.

If elected I will build on plans underway with our ISTA partners. First, a plan is developing to recruit and train a diverse team of 4-5 Member Organizers. I hope through this officer role I can serve as the point person for our organizers. I also hope to serve as a Group Coordinator for an exciting training opportunity from NEA/ISTA called Skills To Win where a team of at least 10 LEA Members will learn strategies to develop and implement direct action campaigns. Lastly, membership campaigns and leader identification. If you don't see yourself in the current LEA, I see ways to change that. We need diverse voices to shape our current reality and future possibilities.

The pandemic really impacted the momentum teachers unions were starting to build here in Indiana. It's clear that we can't wait for someone else to fix local level problems, we need skills and plans to do it ourselves! We have to work together across our local to tackle ongoing issues. As dues paying members, we have support and protection from our union to organize for change.

Not today. Not without pay. Not without our say.

As an LEA officer for several years, I've had the opportunity to review and track data that tells a different story from the one the Board Members get. Whether this is bargaining surveys, HR personnel reports (resignations, retirements, leaves, new contracts), Kelley Services Absence data, and professional rights representation data. It will come as no surprise to any of you still reading that this data shows teachers are tired, overwhelmed, and looking for something different or better.

Over the past decade or so, the administration has taken advantage of the state legislature's campaign to gut our labor rights. A number of threats have kept us divided and not working strategically as a local. If we continue like this, we may never know what is possible to improve our working conditions. We may be giving up opportunities for a better Lawrence. My vision is to work with our teachers to build a union that is as powerful and accountable to each other as we are for our students.

Whether it is a building or district level issue, I am ready to work with you for a better Lawrence teachers union!

“Being Union” is very different from “belonging to a union”