Executive Summary

Department Membership Committee

Reporting Period: September 16 – October 14, 2026
Prepared for: Board of Directors

Executive Overview

The Department Membership Committee met on September 16 and October 14, 2026, to address membership recruitment, retention, member engagement, and the long-term sustainability of the committee. Discussions centered on strengthening membership initiatives across the department, improving participation in post meetings and activities, and developing strategies to support membership growth across the organization's entire family.

The committee continues to monitor progress toward membership competition goals. As of October 14, 57% of the membership goal had been met before the October 14 target date. The next milestone is 65% by November 11, 2026, with a recommendation to aim for 70% by that date. Additional priorities include developing a membership survey, identifying specialized committee teams, improving outreach coordination, and evaluating potential barriers to member engagement and renewal.

Key Discussions and Strategic Priorities

1. Membership Recruitment and Retention

The committee identified recruitment, outreach, retention, maintenance, awards and affirmations, and health and revitalization as potential specialty team areas. These teams are intended to strengthen accountability, coordinate efforts, and address membership needs more effectively.

The committee also discussed the importance of collaboration among posts to support recruitment and membership growth throughout the department. Members were asked to submit statewide activities, including dates and times, to the committee chair for coordination of outreach tables and engagement opportunities.

2. Membership Competition and Performance

Membership competition progress remains a primary focus. The committee reported that 57% of the membership goal had been achieved by October 14, 2026. The next target is 65% by November 11, with a recommendation to increase the goal to 70%.

Additional coordination is needed to compile and calculate competition points and clarify team colors. A team flyer will be developed to communicate competition details and encourage participation.

3. Member Engagement and Renewal Challenges

The committee raised concerns regarding member participation in post meetings and activities. A second survey was proposed to identify factors that may prevent members from actively engaging.

Concerns were also expressed about the effectiveness of Buddy Checks this year and whether reduced effectiveness may be contributing to membership renewal challenges. Further assessment is needed before drawing conclusions about the relationship between Buddy Checks and renewal outcomes.

4. Long-Term Sustainability and Leadership Development

The committee emphasized the need to establish a sustainable structure that can continue through future leadership transitions. Developing a clear vision and mission focused on recruiting younger members across the organization's family was identified as an important long-term priority.

The committee also recommended reviewing the TAL 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee Report as a resource for membership planning and strategic development.

Action Items and Follow-Up

- **Membership competition:** Continue monitoring progress toward the November 11 target and pursue the recommended 70% goal.
- **Competition materials:** Clarify team colors and develop a flyer outlining the membership competition.
- **Membership survey:** Obtain committee feedback and approval on the survey already distributed by email.
- **Member engagement survey:** Develop a second survey to identify barriers to participation in post meetings and activities.
- **Resource sharing:** Patricia Mathes-Kerr will distribute the referenced TAL 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee Report. The report's date should be verified before circulation, as the meeting notes contain inconsistent dates.
- **Outreach coordination:** Collect statewide activity dates and times to identify opportunities for outreach tables.
- **Committee structure:** Continue identifying specialty teams and consider adding family members to each team.
- **Membership renewal:** Further examine Buddy Checks and other possible factors affecting renewal and engagement.

Considerations and Recommended Next Steps

The committee's current work supports a more coordinated and sustainable approach to membership growth and retention. Support may be beneficial in the following areas:

1. Encourage posts to coordinate recruitment and outreach activities across the department.
2. Support continued evaluation of membership renewal challenges and member engagement barriers.
3. Encourage development of a sustainable committee structure, including leadership continuity and recruitment of younger members.
4. Request updates on membership competition progress and survey findings to help guide future membership strategies.

Upcoming Meeting

The next Membership Committee meeting is scheduled for **November 18, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom**, due to the second Wednesday of November falling on Veterans Day.

Conclusion

The Department Membership Committee is working to strengthen recruitment, retention, engagement, and long-term sustainability. Immediate priorities include achieving the next membership competition milestone, gathering feedback through surveys, coordinating statewide outreach, and developing a structure that supports continued growth across the department. Continued monitoring and collaboration will be important to assess progress and determine which strategies are most effective.