



# **ARE YOU READY? YOUR UNION'S CALL TO ACTION!**

## **You Still Need A Good Defense...**

In the coming years we are likely to continue to find our Staff Unions under assault as NEA & State Affiliates attempt to restructure in the face of threats similar to what we faced in the *Friedrichs* case. Change may well be necessary, but we need to make sure we are equal participants in creating that change. In order to protect & strengthen our staff union, we need to take the following steps:

### **Maintaining Unity & Educate Your Staff Union Members:**

Create meaningful opportunities for members' engagement, education, feedback, and leadership -- build a culture of participatory democracy.

Make sure your members know the threats they face, internal *and* external, and that the way to face them is by standing together.

Review your union code of conduct. Solidarity is our strength, not individual relationships with management.

### **Strengthen Your Contract Language:**

Strengthen your Seniority and RIF language, as well as your language around Transfers & Reassignments. Don't let managers use these crises to pick and choose staff, allowing an opportunity to reshape your union in their image. Make sure processes are clear, well-defined, & based on seniority. Keep management's ability to RIF, Transfer, or Reassign narrow in scope.

Make sure you have strong language to limit Subcontracting/Outsourcing and the use of temporary employees. Don't let them create a scab work force. That takes work away from your staff union and costs jobs for members.

### **Make Sure Your Staff Union Crisis Funds are Adequate.**

### **And lastly, Don't Let Your Employer Claim Financial Distress Without Proof!**

Go over your employer's finances:

- Secure copies of recent audits
- Determine reserve fund balances
- Go over membership trends over the last 5 years
- Find your Pension's Funding Ratio (asset vs. liabilities)
- Look over prior year surpluses and losses (deficits).

**Only if we are strong, only if management respects us, can we move forward as an equal partners in what lies ahead.**

