



SPRING INTO SUMMER: SEPTEMBER SCHOOL SUPPLIES EDITION

What:

Many families are struggling and many parents are unable to provide the basic school supplies their children need to be effective. In addition, schools across the country are facing severe budget cuts and lack the funding to purchase necessary supplies, forcing many teachers to buy supplies for their classrooms out of their own pocket.

This is a community service based project, and also provides Next Up the opportunity to highlight structural problems and begin a public discussion about access to education and economic justice.

Goals:

- Donate school supplies to a low-income or underserved school chosen in coordination with your local CLC
- Participation from CLC and/or Area/State Fed, in addition to 2-3 local unions
- Learn about and discuss structural issues that need to be addressed, such as quality jobs (teachers and parents), adequate funding for schools, etc.
- Demonstrate concrete accomplishments coming out of Next Up Summit by YWG participating in existing Labor Day plan (for example: labor day breakfast, luncheon, etc) to announce DOL comment submission results and school supply drive to local and state leadership.

Actions:

There are three parts to this action: actual collection of supplies, discussion of underlying systemic education problems, and delivery of supplies. Below is a sample template to guide your planning.

1. Collect school supplies to donate to children and families as kids head back to school and do debrief discussion following the action of delivering the school supplies.
 - *Talk to your CLC or Area/State Fed about the plan, and to identify local affiliates that can participate in the collection of supplies.*
 - *How to choose a school*
Contact your local school board to find out which schools are designated as Title I schools. These schools have 50% or more of the students on free or reduced lunch and demonstrate a high need of support.

- *What types of supplies to collect*
 - *Elementary schools: pencils, notebook paper (wide width), folders (with prongs), crayons, glue sticks, dry erase markers, sharpies, etc.*
 - *Middle/High schools: pencils, pens, college ruled notebook paper, folders (with prongs), dry erase markers, sharpies, etc.*
2. Plan a discussion to talk about underlying issues of why schools, teachers and families do not have adequate resources to educate our young people and what we can do.
- Choose a meeting time and location an hour or two before the delivery of the school supplies.
 - Ask your CLC or Area/State Fed to invite all affiliates to participate in the discussion, and be sure to invite a representative from your local teacher's union.
 - Sample discussion questions
 - *Too often teachers buy their own school supplies for the classroom. Discuss the impact this has on teachers and students alike. Consider factors that like most impacted communities, neighborhoods and how they can be different.*
 - *There are many reasons that schools are underfunded. Consider is managed budgets, lack of awareness on the part of administrators for teacher/student needs, and the knowledge that, without certain tools at their disposal, students simply cannot learn. Discuss some of these and brainstorm potential ways that we as Next Up can **ACT** to affect long-term change that are not community service. Who are the decision makers? How could working as a labor movement in direct action help? What are legislative options? How can politicians help? How could we move politicians to support?*
 - *One of the pieces of the Youth Economic Agenda calls for dramatically increasing access to postsecondary education and training for all. How does lack of funding and ensuring teachers have quality jobs adversely impact this goal?*
 - As you wrap up the discussion, be sure to head over as a group to deliver the supplies!
 - Be sure to take a group picture
 - Share on social media -- @AFLCIONxtUp, #1u, #1uNextUp or www.facebook.com/aflcionextup
3. **DON'T FORGET TO SHOWCASE THIS AND THE DOL COMMENTS AT YOUR LABOR DAY EVENTS!**

Don't forget to tell us about your events on [Action Network!](#)