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CONTACT INFO + SOCIAL MEDIA

Worthington Public Libraries United (WPLU) has a general email address that WL staff can contact with questions or concerns: **wplunited@gmail.com**

Update emails sent through Gmail instead of Mailchimp come from this address. *Please add wplunited@gmail.com as an email contact* to ensure messages don't end up buried in spam or a promotional inbox.

You can also follow WPLU on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter/X, all **@wplunited!**

Here is contact information for this location's Building Reps and our Union President:

Building Rep #1:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Building Rep #2:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Building Rep #3:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Union President:	<i>Libby Vasey</i>
Phone:	<i>614-558-2693</i>
Email:	<i>liberacevasey@gmail.com</i>

NOTE: You can go to anyone on page 5 for help, not just these four people.

HOUSEKEEPING

FLOATING HOLIDAYS vs. VACATION

Vacation is a form of paid leave that library employees accrue incrementally over time. Different staff accrue vacation at different rates (i.e., faster or slower). If you are exempt, you accrue Vacation at a set rate. If you are non-exempt/hourly, you accrue Vacation based on two factors:

1. Whether you work part-time or full-time
2. How long you have worked in Ohio public-sector positions (e.g., at Worthington Libraries, at other Ohio public libraries, etc.)
 - o See **Section 5.2.D** of the Personnel Policy Manual, **Article 20.3** of the Union Contract

Floating Holidays (FH) are a form of paid leave employees receive after days when many institutions are closed, but the Library stays open. Our four FHs are:

1. Misc. Personal Day (January 1st)
2. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (3rd Monday of January)
3. Presidents' Day (3rd Monday of February)
4. Veterans Day (November 11th)

Unlike Vacation — but like regular paid Holidays — the amount of FH you receive is not based on how long you have worked at the Library or whether you are exempt. Instead, FH is based on how many hours you work each week. Please see **Article 18** of the Union Contract for exact numbers.

For both FH and Vacation, after you accrue a certain number of hours, you will stop accruing more. At or before this point, you should take some time off. This prevents your paid time off from going to waste by not accruing further.

The important distinction between FH and Vacation is how quickly you reach the maximum amount. It's a lot easier to "max out" on FH than it is Vacation. **Staff can only accrue a maximum balance of four Floating Holidays.** Additionally, FHs are not evenly spaced through the year: most fall in the first two months of the year.

Keep an eye on your FH balance. If you are nearing or at the maximum amount, we encourage you to schedule some time off, so that you don't miss the opportunity to accrue leave you have earned!

UNEXPECTED CLOSURES: HOTLINE + ONE CALL NOW

Sometimes the library cannot open when scheduled, or stay open for its planned hours of operation. This can happen for a few reasons:

- Snow or other extreme weather make travel and being outdoors hazardous
- Utility outages impact ability to use technology and/or facilities
- Public health emergencies, like pandemics, occur

In these situations, there are two ways to figure out whether to report to work:

1. Library Closure Hotline
2. One Call Now

Anytime after 7am, staff can call the Library Closure Hotline at **614-807-3600**. This plays a message stating which (if any) library locations have delayed or canceled opening.

One Call Now is a software that sends alerts by phone, text, or email. Setting up One Call Now is beneficial because it notifies staff of delays and closures without people having to remember to call in. There is information about One Call Now on Grid and on Worthington Libraries' P Drive.

Note:

In the event that the library is open, but inclement weather prevents you from traveling to work, contact a supervisor. You will be able to use Floating Holiday or Vacation to account for time missed. If you do not have leave accrued, you will be able to use unpaid leave or make up lost time as the building schedule permits.

Please see **Article 25** of the Union Contract for more details about unexpected closures.

CURRENT UNION OFFICERS + REPRESENTATIVES

Some of our colleagues have volunteered to help answer Union questions, pass along feedback, and offer support and even representation in certain work meetings. Below is a list of our current WPLU Officers and Representatives.

The best first step is reaching out to a Building Representative at your WL location. Compared to the Officers on the Executive Board/E-Board, Building Reps will have far fewer day-to-day Union tasks to keep up with, and thus, the most availability.

OFFICERS / EXECUTIVE BOARD (E-BOARD)

ROLE	NAME	LOCATION	JOB TITLE
President	Libby Vasey <i>(she/they)</i>	WPK	AS Librarian
Vice President	Ian Martin <i>(he/him)</i>	OWL	Circulation Assistant
Secretary	Jade Braden <i>(she/her)</i>	NWL	Circulation Assistant
Treasurer	Jenn Kalata <i>(they/them)</i>	NWL	AS Library Associate
Lead Building Rep.	TBD		

BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES

NAME	LOCATION	JOB TITLE
Lexi Bright <i>(they/them)</i>	NWL	YS Library Associate
Leah Holmberg <i>(she/her)</i>	NWL	Circulation Assistant
David Reyes, Jr. <i>(he/him)</i>	NWL	AS Librarian
Jodi Langley <i>(she/her)</i>	OWL	YS Librarian
Gerta Rehfeld <i>(she/her)</i>	OWL	YS Library Associate
Emmy Wolfe <i>(she/her)</i>	OWL	YS Library Associate
Zira Kohnert <i>(she/they)</i>	WPK	AS Library Associate
Meredith Whittaker <i>(she/her)</i>	WPK	AS Library Associate
TBD	WPK	

UNION FEEDBACK FORM

If you have more general concerns or feedback to share with the Union, you can use our online feedback form. This is a place to share your comments and concerns with Union Officers and Representatives, and also other WPLU members. The goal of this form is to allow everyone an opportunity to make their voice heard.

The E-Board can bring member feedback to monthly Labor Management Committee (LMC) meetings with Administrators, to put concerns on Admin's radar and nip issues in the bud. Every piece of feedback is responded to in some way. The E-Board notes outcomes in the same form, indicating Admin's response and follow-up measures.

To access the form, either scan this QR code, or type the short link into any browser:



bit.ly/wplufedback

ACCESSING AFT BENEFITS

Being part of WPLU allows all of us to access lots of Union Plus benefits, described in detail on page **16**, and in some brochures and handouts included with this booklet.

These benefits are easy to access, and just require filling out two quick online forms.

First, you will need to acquire your member number. Do this by either scanning the QR code on the right, or type the following short link into any browser:

bit.ly/aftbenefits

On this webpage, please provide your:

- First name
- Last name
- Personal email address
- Personal mailing address



You will also need to put in WPLU's local number, which is (no joke): **06606**

After you fill out that form, it will ask you to opt in or out of more emails from AFT. The mailing address is where your physical card will be sent, and the email address is where your member number will be sent. The email with your member number will include a link to register your new ID.

You can also register your new ID by using this short link: **bit.ly/aftlogin**

Click **Create an AFT Account**, and enter your member number, WPLU's local number, personal email address, and password.

- Check your email or your physical member card to find your member number. If you have any difficulties, please let the E-Board know so we can help.

After your account is created, you will be able to log in on the same page and access all your Union Plus benefits!

FAQ

Q. *What is a union/bargaining unit?*

A. It's in the name! A labor union is **a group of coworkers, united**. Unions allow people to address policies or issues as a collective group, rather than just as individuals.

Standing together gives workers far more bargaining power than any of us has on our own. Expressing input as a group amplifies all our voices, allowing us to work effectively with management to improve workplace policies.

Labor unions are democratically formed and run. You get to decide whether to join our union. If you do, you will have a say in which staff represent the union, what issues are prioritized in future union contracts, and more.

Q. *Why did Worthington Libraries staff form a union?*

A. People join and support unions for a huge variety of reasons. Valuing many different perspectives and areas of expertise is what makes unions strong.

Though WL staff did not unionize for a single joint reason, unions commonly help with: increased **wages** and **job security**, flexible **scheduling**, and enhanced **benefits**.

Through collective bargaining, we were able to gain all of the above and more. We'll discuss these wins in more detail shortly.

Q. *How did our union come to be?*

A. A group of staff formed an organizing committee (OC), although at the time they didn't know it was called that. It was simply a group of staff interested in unionizing.

Workers on the OC reached out to AFL-CIO (a federation of unions; see glossary (A-1) for guidance. The OC began working with the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT).

Meanwhile, staff on the OC started talking with coworkers. They wanted to hear how people felt about working conditions and policies, and ask whether they had any interest in forming a union. Unions can only form with majority support, so these conversations

helped the OC tell if staff as a whole wanted this. If not, there was no path forward.

Months of conversations helped the OC figure out that interest was widespread. A super-majority of staff whose job titles OFT and the OC believed could legally be in the union signed authorization cards. These cards were sent to the State Employment Relations Board (SERB; see glossary (A-1)), and copies were shown to library management.

After WL's union "went public," our Board of Trustees could choose between **1)** voluntary recognition of the union, or **2)** having staff cast secret ballots in an election run by SERB. The Board picked option #2, and over 90% of ballots cast were in favor of unionizing.

Once votes were counted, our union was official! We decided to call it Worthington Public Libraries United (WPLU). WPLU was then able to begin bargaining with management to create our first union contract, or Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

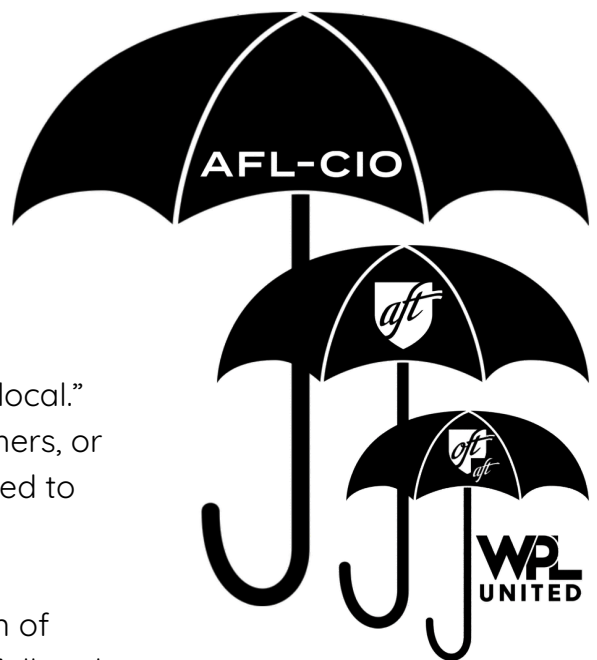
Q. *How does WPLU relate to OFT?*

A. WPLU stands for Worthington Public Libraries United. That is the name of our local union. WPLU includes a large portion of staff who work at Old Worthington Library, Northwest Library, and Worthington Park Library. See our Union Constitution for a complete list of included job categories.

WPLU is a local union, sometimes just called a "local." We organized with the Ohio Federation of Teachers, or OFT. WPLU is one of many local unions that opted to work with OFT to form their union.

In turn, OFT falls under the American Federation of Teachers, or AFT. Last, WPLU, OFT, and AFT all fall under the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations: AFL-CIO.

Each larger organization provides support to the organizations affiliating under it. Please use the glossary in the appendix (A-1) to learn more about these four entities.



Q. *What is meant by "the Union," with a capital "U"?*

A. Before we go over how we negotiated our first union contract, let's clarify terminology.

In our union contract, Worthington Libraries' Board of Trustees and administrators are referred to as "the Library," while the labor union that staff chose to form is referred to as "the Union." This can be confusing, or even paint our union as an outside agitator somehow separate from library staff.

Understand that **we, library staff as a collective, are the union.** One of the reasons the OC worked with OFT is because OFT views unions as "member-led." This means OFT believes workers in a bargaining unit are the foremost experts on their workplace.

For example, when we created our first union contract, WL union staff who were serving on the bargaining committee wrote proposals themselves based on surveys sent out to all union members. OFT provided guidance and legal language to support those proposals, while the content remained our own. Proposals presented to management during bargaining were shaped, written, and ratified by WPLU, **not** OFT, AFT, or AFL-CIO.

We rely on OFT for lots of help, and feel solidarity with unions near and far. But our union is not defined by OFT or even WPLU's own Executive Board; truly, it refers to every single union member who works at Worthington Libraries.

Q. *What is a union contract/collective bargaining agreement?*

A. A union contract is a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with different articles (i.e., sections) that set in place rules and working conditions.

From start to finish, bargaining works like this:

BEFORE BARGAINING

Before bargaining begins, a group of union staff volunteer to be on the bargaining committee (BC). The BC's job is to go to the bargaining table and represent the interests of everyone in the union.

To find out what needs to be prioritized during bargaining, the BC solicits feedback from all bargaining unit staff. This can be done through a survey, or other tools that allow responses to be aggregated so workers' top concerns are clear.

DURING BARGAINING

CBAs are created through meetings between **1)** the BC and **2)** management or Board

members. Each team may be accompanied by lawyers or other representatives. These meetings are called bargaining sessions.

When both bargaining teams are satisfied with a contract article, it is tentatively agreed upon (TA'd) by both groups. This helps negotiations proceed to other articles.

AFTER BARGAINING

After all articles in the contract have been TA'd, a draft of the CBA is released in full to everyone in the union and the Board of Trustees. Both parties are given time to review the document. Then, union members and the Board vote on whether the CBA can be ratified as is, or if more bargaining needs to take place.

CBAs only go into effect after a majority of union members **and** a majority of Board members say it can; this is known as ratification. If one or both groups are unhappy with the contract, they can vote no and bargaining will resume until a new draft CBA is ready for review.

Union contracts expire and are replaced by new ones. We are currently working under our first CBA as a union, which is valid until December 31st, 2025.

Q. *What did we win in our first union contract?*

A. A lot has changed at WL because of our first contract. Below are some key examples.

In our first contract, we won **three new forms of paid leave**: assault leave, bereavement leave, and parental leave. We won staff an **extra floating holiday**, and shortened the number of years it takes non-exempt staff to **earn vacation faster**.

We **guaranteed raises** each year for the life of the contract. Certain positions moved up an entire pay grade. We negotiated to have \$25,000 set aside every year for staff to receive **tuition reimbursement** for relevant degrees like the MLIS.

We bargained for **increased flexibility**. Staff are now able to use vacation before their floating holiday balance is exhausted, if they so choose. Public service staff can more readily use vacation on weekends, if they don't want to or are unable to find a trade.

Three years is a long time between contracts, so in the meantime, our contract let us form a **Labor Management Committee** (LMC). The LMC has an equal number of people from WPLU and management. LMC meetings are scheduled monthly, with a shared goal of opening lines of communication and nipping issues in the bud.

Still, the biggest gains of any first union contract relate to **job security** and **discipline**, which we will elaborate on in the next sections.

Q. *How do unions increase job security?*

A. Before WL had a union, all of us were “at-will.” At-will employment is precarious, because it means you can be fired for any reason that is not illegal (e.g., based on race, gender).

Additionally, at-will jobs can change terms of employment without any notice. For example, management could suddenly reduce paid time off or wages for any (or no) reason, and at-will workers would have scarce recourse.

By contrast, unions offer protection from arbitrary changes. When workers join together, we can leverage the power we hold as a collective to bargain with management. Union workers at WL are no longer at-will. We can only be disciplined or fired with **just cause**.

In a union setting, just cause is the standard to which management must adhere when disciplining or discharging an employee. Essentially, it means that an employer must have reasons and evidence to make such choices.

Just cause builds in sequential mechanisms to protect staff from retaliation — it is the powerful keystone of our and other CBAs. It goes hand-in-hand with Weingarten Rights.

Q. *What are Weingarten Rights?*

A. Weingarten Rights **allow union workers to have union representation in meetings** with supervisors, managers, and/or administrators, where you think there is a possibility of facing discipline or changes to your working conditions.

Union representation includes Building Reps or anyone on WPLU’s Executive Board (see page **5**, in the Housekeeping section, for a complete list).

Our union contract created a brand new discipline procedure. It progresses step-by-step and, when needed, escalates to grievances and ultimately, binding arbitration. Binding arbitration means a neutral third party will look at what’s happening and make an enforceable decision. The next question will discuss grievances more.

Weingarten Rights are kind of like waiting to talk until your lawyer is present. Sometimes a lead may ask if you want a Union Rep in a meeting. If you are not offered a Union Rep, you can always preempt or pause a meeting to say you want a Rep with you. If none are present at the time of the meeting, the meeting must be rescheduled.

We encourage keeping Weingarten verbiage nearby at work, just in case. You can copy it onto your phone, or keep it with your name badge, or in your wallet or mailbox. You could also simply say, “I need a Union Rep with me before this meeting continues.”

We hope there are few occasions where Weingarten Rights are needed, and it may be strange to think about soon after starting a new job. We just want to make it clear: you have the right to have a Union rep with you in any meeting that could result in discipline or change your working conditions. Reps can sit with you, take notes, offer advice, or do the talking for you. **You do not need to feel alone** at work. Lean on our Union.

Q. *What does it mean to file a grievance?*

A. Grievances allow us to point out and resolve issues with the enforcement of our union contract. “Filing a grievance” is a fancy term for union members or the Union itself documenting and submitting believed union contract violations to management.

Worthington Libraries has long had (and still has) a separate PPM grievance procedure. This is the only grievance option for non-Union staff. It also applies to Union staff facing issues at work that do not violate the Union Contract.

Union grievances are far more effective. Importantly, union grievances can escalate to involve neutral third parties, like mediators and arbitrators from the State Employment Relations Board (SERB) or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS).

Union grievances also allow staff who have been treated unfairly or inappropriately to win enforceable relief. See **Article 7** of our CBA for full details of this process.

Timing is important with grievances: they **need to be filed within the week of a CBA violation** or issue occurring. If you ever need to file a grievance, contact a Building Rep or email wplunited@gmail.com as soon as possible to start the process. If you are unsure whether a grievance is needed, it’s still good to ask a Building Rep, so we can talk with you about what happened and next steps.

Q. *What is a Union Rep?*

A. For WPLU, a Union Rep refers to either a **1)** Union Officer or **2)** Building Rep.

As described earlier, workers who enact their Weingarten Rights can have a Union Rep with them in any interaction that could alter their working conditions or lead to discipline.

Union Officers can act as Building Reps if needed, but Building Reps cannot act as Union Officers. See the next two questions for more information, and WPLU's Constitution for full details.

Q. *What is a Union Officer?*

A. WPLU has five Union Officers, each of whom work in a different role:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Lead Building Representative

These five Officers comprise the Unions Executive Board, or E-Board for short.

Union Officers nominate themselves or are nominated by others. If there are lots of nominations, an election will take place so staff can vote on who their officers will be.

In combination, the E-Board oversees most day-to-day Union operations, including Labor Management Committee (LMC) meetings, internal and external correspondence, discipline and grievance issues, responsibly handling dues and other funds, and more.

Officers can also attend union conferences and conventions as delegates, and serve on the bargaining committee (BC) when it's time to negotiate a new union contract. E-Board members can all act in the capacity of a Building Rep (see next question) as needed.

Q. *What is a Building Rep?*

A. Because the E-Board keeps track of so much behind the scenes, Building Reps are a helpful "first line of defense" for staff having issues at work. There are multiple Building Reps at each WL location.

Like Officers, Building Reps nominate themselves or are nominated by others for this role. If there are lots of nominations, an election will take place, so staff can vote to elect preferred Building Reps.

Building Reps can sit in on meetings with staff who enact their Weingarten Rights. You can also ask Building Reps about general union questions, topics you want the Labor Management Committee to address, or issues that may require filing a grievance.

Even if a Building Rep does not have an immediate answer for a union member, they can still pass information and questions to the E-Board.

Q. *How much are dues?*

A. Dues vary based on wages. We felt it would be equitable for those who earn less at the library to pay less in dues than union members who make more money.

Usually the monthly cost of dues hovers around **two hours of work for each month, or one hour of work for each pay period**. For some it may be more, and for others it could be less. This is because wages vary person-to-person based on starting salary, seniority, and other factors.

To figure out exactly how much your dues will be, **see the Dues Reference Sheet in the appendix** (A-2). This table shows where dues money goes, and total amounts to the cent.

All dues are paid monthly, but we split them up to be deducted from most paychecks to keep take-home pay consistent. For the few months of the year where staff receive three paychecks instead of two, the third paycheck will not have any dues deducted.

Q. *What do dues pay for?*

A. Dues go four places. The umbrella graphic — seen also on page 9 and in our appendix — may help clarify this distribution:

1. AFL-CIO
American Federation of Labor + Congress of Industrial Organizations
2. AFT
American Federation of Teachers



3. OFT
Ohio Federation of Teachers
4. WPLU
Worthington Public Libraries United

The **Dues Reference Sheet** (A-2 in the appendix) breaks costs down to the cent.

Generally speaking, dues pay for lots of things that benefit our union, unions as a whole, and you personally. Benefits include **legal defense funds** that would be needed if a grievance requires binding arbitration, events and spaces like OFT's Columbus office, and union **conferences and conventions**. Union buttons, shirts, signs, and other **physical materials** can be paid for with dues.

Dues contribute to the **salaries of Labor Organizers and Field Representatives**, people who guide us while bargaining for contracts and help other interested libraries unionize.

AFT dues also get you access to all sorts of exclusive discounts and offers. Educational benefits include **scholarships** and help reducing student loan debt. Union members can access counseling related to finances, legal issues, and traumatic events. Health perks include **discounts on prescriptions, dental, vision, and medical devices** like hearing aids, life alert systems, and diabetes supplies.

Cashback and discounts can also be received for **airline travel, utility costs, auto care and rentals, dining, groceries, hotels, and office supplies**.

AFT provides several insurance options, including accidental death and dismemberment, auto insurance, home insurance, life insurance, pet insurance, and renters **insurance**.

The main point is, the cost of dues is offset (and then some) not only by increased wages and better benefits at work, but also by cashback, discounts, insurance, and scholarships available to union members across the United States.

Even still, everything above is not a complete list. Please see your blue brochure for more benefits, and page **7** for how to sign up for AFT member discounts.

Q. *What **don't** dues pay for?*

A. Dues can never be used for certain things. For example, **union dues do not go towards**

campaign or politician contributions. A separate voluntary fund exists for this purpose (the Committee on Political Education (COPE)), which none of us ever has to pay into.

Dues would only be used for political or legislative purposes to inform us about bills relevant to us (e.g., about worker's rights, book bans and censorship, PLF funding, levies).

Q. *What happens if I choose not to pay dues?*

A. Organizations that collect dues, like unions, define membership based on their payment. In Ohio, union membership is not forced, nor do we believe it should be.

However, we would love for everyone who is eligible to be part of our Union to join. The reason why is simple: unions are predicated on the collective strength of workers who stand together.

It does not matter if you were here when we went public or ratified our first contract. Whether you started working at Worthington Libraries 30 years ago or this week, your input is valuable and needed.

If you choose not to be a dues-paying Union member, you will still have access to the changes and benefits we secured by forming a Union, including representation by the Union in cases of grievances or discipline. But, **those who opt not to pay dues will be ineligible to vote on all future contracts and elected Union roles, nor will they have access to give input on issues important to them when future contracts are being negotiated. Additionally, the AFT benefits outlined on page 16 are exclusive to dues-paying members.**

We share these specific drawbacks not to pressure anyone, but to help prospective members make an informed decision on their own.

We want to hear from and represent as many WL workers as we can. We want as many people as possible to take advantage of AFT benefits. Union membership will save you money overall, and provides WL staff meaningful input at work.

Your being a member strengthens our union and gives you a say, so that WPLU knows what issues are most important to address in LMC meetings now and in new contracts years from now. This is only the beginning.

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NOTE: UNION CONTRACT AND CONSTITUTION ARE AVAILABLE AS SEPARATE BOOKLETS

GLOSSARY

Union Organizations / Levels

AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations; A federation of national and international labor unions, representing over 12 million workers.
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)	An affiliate of AFL-CIO, representing almost 2 million members nationwide.
Committee on Political Education (COPE)	An organization that pools campaign contributions from members and donates those funds to campaigns for or against candidates, ballot initiatives, or legislation. This is typically related to a specific union (OFT has one) and runs off of voluntary donations. In other words, our dues do not and cannot be directed here.
Local	The local branch or chapter of a larger (usually national) union that represents several locals; locals may be as large as a region or as small as a single workplace. Our local is called Worthington Public Libraries United (WPLU/6606) , which is one of many OFT locals.
Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)	Ohio Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of AFT, representing 20,000+ members in over 50 Ohio locals. WPLU organized with and falls under the umbrella of OFT .

Organizing Lingo

Bargaining Committee (BC)	Group of employees democratically elected by the <i>bargaining unit</i> to negotiate a <i>collective bargaining agreement</i> (i.e., union contract) with management.
“Filing,” or “Going public” i.e., “marching on the boss”	Notifies the government and our employer that we’re forming our union. On a morning in June 2021, dozens of WL staff “went public” by presenting <i>SERB</i> and our administrators with authorization cards signed by a super majority of staff.
Job category	In some ways similar to one’s job’s title, but also distinct. Job categories are a factor used in determining who can be part of a labor union, job categories consider day-to-day work duties, in addition to official job titles and position descriptions.
Organizing Committee (OC)	A small group of staff in a workplace who talk to their colleagues about forming a union together; after a union is won, this committee dissolves.
State Employment Relations Board (SERB)	Government entity that administers the Ohio Public Employees’ Collective Bargaining Act; oversees all Ohio public sector unions. SERB sent us ballots and counted our votes, and has staff who can act as mediators.

Union i.e., bargaining unit	<p>Collective group of workers in certain <i>job categories</i> who choose to stand together and form a union.</p> <p>Bargaining units push for change more effectively than individual workers, because there is power and safety in numbers, which can be leveraged in <i>collective bargaining</i>.</p> <p>Everyone in a bargaining unit is represented by the bargaining committee (BC) when negotiating a <i>collective bargaining agreement/union contract</i>.</p>
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Union Protections

At-will employment	<p>Without a union, at-will-employment allows employers to terminate employees for any reason or no reason, and without warning, as long as the reason for termination is not illegal.</p> <p>*See <i>just cause</i> for the difference a union makes.</p>
Collective Bargaining	<p>Negotiating workplace changes as a group, rather than as individuals, which 1) increases our power to make change, and 2) protects individual staff from retaliation.</p> <p>The result of these negotiations is a <i>collective bargaining agreement</i>.</p>
Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) i.e., union contract	<p>CBAs are negotiated union contracts between a <i>bargaining unit</i> and an employer that sets in place working conditions, workplace policies, and terms of employment, including wages, benefits, grievances, and more.</p>
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS)	<p>An independent agency of the United States government for dispute resolution and conflict management, providing mediation services and related conflict prevention and resolution services in the private, public, and federal sectors.</p> <p>This organization can be helpful in cases of negotiations (i.e. union contracts/collective bargaining).</p>
Just Cause	<p>Just Cause is an important legal distinction providing union members enhanced job security in contrast to <i>at-will employment</i>.</p> <p>Union employees may only be disciplined or terminated with just cause.</p> <p>Details about the standard of just cause are included in union contracts/<i>CBAs</i>.</p>

Our Union

Executive Board (E-Board)	<p>The governing body in a union that directly manages the union itself. These are elected positions and, for WPLU, include the president, the vice president, secretary, treasurer, lead building representative.</p>
Labor Management Committee (LMC)	<p>A committee that brings union leadership and management representatives together to address workplace issues and improvements. The committee includes 3 bargaining unit members chosen by the Union (currently WPLU's President, Vice President, and Secretary) and up to 3 library directors or their designees.</p>

Union Officer	An in-unit staff member that is either elected or appointed by the union who is authorized to represent the union.
Union Representative (i.e., Rep)	Elected position holders who represent, inform, and advocate for in-unit staff. Reps can accompany union staff to disciplinary hearings with management or facilitate the grievance process.

UNION UMBRELLAS



This graphic provides a visual for the relationship between:

- American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)
- WPLU (Worthington Public Libraries United)

DUES REFERENCE SHEET

Dues Reference Sheet

What range is your yearly salary in?	Based on that, your dues will be:					So, you will pay in TOTAL:		
	AFL-CIO	AFT	OFT	WPLU	÷ 2 =	EVERY MONTH	MOST PAYCHECKS*	
	\$10,557 - \$17,387	\$1.10	\$5	\$3.99		\$15.10	\$7.55	
	\$17,388 - \$41,211	\$1.10	\$10.10	\$7.98		\$30.18	\$15.09	
	\$41,212 or more	\$1.10	\$20.18	\$15.96		\$50.24	\$25.12	

*Dues are deducted during 24 pay periods each year. Occasionally, we have months with three paychecks instead of two. During such months, dues come out of two paychecks, not all three.

Understanding Union Dues

Union dues, a small amount that every member chips in, are what gives our union the strength and resources to win – and enforce – strong contracts that benefit our members, our students, and our communities.

The union dues that you pay are divided between your local union, your state federation (Ohio Federation of Teachers), and your national federation (American Federation of Teachers). Below is a list of many of the benefits, resources, and programs that your dues money pays for, along with some extra facts about your dues and our internal system of governance and accountability.

About Local Dues

- ***The amount that members pay in local dues is set at the local level.***
- Every OFT local union determines what to spend their local dues on. Since OFT local unions vary in size, from small locals with just a couple dozen members to larger locals with hundreds or thousands of members, local dues allow the local to spend resources meeting their specific needs and challenges.
- You and your co-workers can learn more about how your local dues are spent by attending membership meetings. You can also get involved in how those decisions are made by running for local union leadership positions. *Every dues-paying member is eligible for local leadership.*
- ***All dues, even state and national shares, are collected at the local level. Your local union treasurer then sends the appropriate amounts to OFT and AFT for state and national dues.***



Some Examples of What Local Dues Could Pay For

- Legal defense fund.*
- Negotiation expenses.
- Conferences, trainings, meetings, events.
- Union swag (t-shirts, buttons, lanyards, etc.)
- Food at meetings.
- Stipends for committees, officers, and other time-intensive union work.
- Office supplies and printing.
- Office space.
- Scholarships.

* – See note on back.

About State (OFT) Dues

- For the 2023-2024 school year, OFT dues are \$13.46 per member per month.
- OFT's budget is set biennially at our statewide convention. Every OFT local can send voting delegates to the OFT convention.
- In between conventions, OFT's governance body is the Executive Council. Every OFT local can appoint members to the Executive Council.
- The size of your local's delegation to the convention or to the Executive Council is proportional to the membership size of your local.

Some Examples of What OFT Dues Pay For

- OFT Field Coordinator Support:
 - » Advice, assistance, and representation on professional issues and grievances.
 - » Bargaining support.
 - » Member engagement (*First Book grants, student debt clinics, etc.*).
- Retirement Advocacy (*for contributing and retired members of STRS, SERS, and OPERS*).
- Legal defense fund.*
- Lobbying and Advocacy
 - » Lobbying on issues that impact members' working conditions or rights in the workplace.
 - » Support for local levies.
 - » Advocacy in our local school boards and at the State Board of Education.
- Trainings for local union leaders (trainings for local Treasurers, Stewards, Building Representatives, and Presidents; trainings on topics like negotiations, grievances, communications).



[Continued on back.]

Some Examples of What OFT Dues Pay For

[Continued from front.]

- Professional Issues Support and Resources (OTES, licensure, other ODE programs and policies).
 - » This will be critical in the 2023-24 school year as more policy responsibilities are shifted to the new Ohio Dept. of Education and Workforce.
- Conferences and Events (Convention, Local Leaders Conference, Union Leadership Institute, Local Presidents' Retreat, Executive Council Meetings).
- Organizing new local unions in education and related fields (charter schools, public libraries, social work).



About COPE Donations

- **Union dues do not support political candidates.**
- Only voluntary COPE (Committee on Political Education) donations support pro-worker, pro-education candidates in Ohio.
- Members must explicitly opt in to make COPE donations.

About AFL-CIO Affiliation

- \$1.10 per member per month pays for our affiliation to the Ohio AFL-CIO.
- This keeps us connected with other union members in our communities, like firefighters, nurses, service workers, public employees, etc.
- Some examples of what AFL-CIO funds are used for: advocating for pro-worker state policy; supporting organizing campaigns, strikes, or other labor actions; coordinating special events and benefits for union members.

* There are legal defense funds at the local, state, and national levels. These funds allow us to enforce our contract by taking disputes to binding, third-party arbitration (following the full grievance process). Most arbitration cases qualify for cost sharing, with the costs split evenly between the local union, OFT, and AFT. Arbitration cases that don't qualify for cost sharing are paid for by the local union.

About National (AFT) Dues

- For the 2023-2024 school year, full AFT dues are \$20.18 per member per month. Members who earn less than \$22,011 or less than the beginning teacher's salary (whichever is higher) are eligible for 1/2, 1/4, or 1/8 dues (depending on salary).
- The AFT budget is set by member delegates at the AFT convention.

Some Examples of What AFT Dues Pay For

- Occupational Liability Coverage. This includes:
 - » \$1 million professional liability insurance.
 - » \$5,000 for legal representation for licensure issue.
 - » Coverage for other legal issues. Email us at info@oft-aft.org for a flier with more details.
- Legal defense fund.*
- Accidental death and dismemberment policy.
- Militancy fund, to provide financial support during strikes.
- Research-based professional development through AFT's Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) program.
- Organizing support for new local unions.
- Professional resources, including AFT's Share My Lesson (sharemylesson.com).
- Data and technical support for local unions and state federations.
- Governance (convention, infrastructure, and operations).
- Innovation Fund grants.
- Member engagement (back-to-school grants, Reading Opens the World campaign, First Book grants, etc).



Questions?

Reach out to your local leadership or email OFT at info@oft-aft.org for more information.