

WHAT MAKES A STRONG CHAPTER?



Strong chapters do not depend on a single leader. They are built on systems, relationships, and shared responsibility.

Common characteristics of strong chapters include:

- Regular communication with members
- Clear site leadership structures
- Consistently scheduled chapter meetings
- Shared leadership and delegation
- A visible union presence at the worksite
- Early identification of workplace issues
- Member involvement before a crisis occurs



Key Takeaway

A chapter should not depend entirely on the Chapter Chair.

RECOMMENDED SITE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Chapter Chair

Primary site leader and representative of the chapter. Responsibilities may include:

- Contract enforcement
- Communication with administration
- Leading chapter meetings
- Coordinating chapter activities
- Supporting members

Vice Chair

Supports the Chapter Chair and helps ensure continuity of leadership. Responsibilities may include:

- Assisting with chapter operations
- Leading projects or campaigns
- Filling in when the Chapter Chair is unavailable

Chapter Action Team (CAT) Leads

CAT Leads serve as the connection between chapter leadership and members. Assignments may be organized by:

- Grade levels
- Departments
- Bungalows/buildings or floors
- Lunch break schedules
- Programs
- Counseling, SPED, and/or itinerant teams

Additional Leadership Roles

Depending on site needs, chapters may also designate leaders for:

- Outreach to new educators and itinerants
- Social events and member engagement
- Communications
- Member onboarding

Best Practice

Aim for approximately one CAT Lead for every 10 members. Whenever possible, organize CAT assignments around natural affinity groups such as departments, grade levels, buildings, cohorts, or existing social networks.

Why This Matters

A broader leadership structure helps:

- Improve communication
- Build stronger relationships
- Identify issues earlier
- Develop future leaders
- Prevent leader burnout

EFFECTIVE CHAPTER MEETINGS



Chapter meetings are one of the primary ways members stay informed, engaged, and connected.

Best Practices for Effective Chapter Meetings

- Build turnout intentionally through CAT outreach
- Reach out to itinerants assigned to your chapter, as they might not be on your roster
- Calendar meetings for the entire year
- Start and end on time
- Use a written agenda
- Provide space for member concerns and workplace issues
- Keep routine updates concise
- Allow time for discussion
- End with clear next steps

Members Should Leave Knowing

1. What is happening
2. Why it matters
3. What they can do

EXTRA TIPS FROM VETERAN CHAPTER CHAIRS



- Include “action items” or follow-up items for members to participate in
- Schedule regular meetings, not just during crises
- Build in points of engagement versus only announcements

UNDERSTANDING THE CHAPTER ACTION TEAM (CAT)



What is a CAT?

CAT stands for Chapter Action Team. The CAT structure is how a chapter stays connected to members across a worksite. A strong CAT system allows information, concerns, and organizing conversations to move in both directions:

- From chapter, area, and citywide leadership to chapter members
- From chapter members to leadership

Why a CAT matters

Having a CAT means:

- Faster communication
- More accurate site pulse
- Better relationship building
- Prevention of burnout

Best Practices for CAT Structures

Aim for approximately one CAT lead for every 10 members. Whenever possible, organize CAT assignments around natural affinity groups such as departments, grade levels, buildings, cohorts, or existing social networks.

CAT assignments can be based on:

- Grade levels
- Lunch break schedules
- Departments
- Programs
- Bungalows/buildings or floors
- Counseling, SPED, and/or itinerant teams

Best Practices for CAT Meetings

CAT meetings should:

- Be short and focused
- Plan outreach
- Identify workplace issues
- Prepare for actions
- Share member concerns
- Prepare agendas for the full Chapter Meeting
- Track participation

CORE ROLES OF CAT MEMBERS

Communication

- Share union updates
- Relay important deadlines and information
- Ensure members stay informed
- Build relationships
- Check in with coworkers regularly
- Build trust and visibility
- Help identify concerns early

Issue Identification

- Surface workplace problems quickly
- Identify patterns affecting multiple members
- Bring concerns back to chapter leadership
- Provide a venue to create draft action plans to offer at chapter meetings

Organizing

- Help move coworkers from frustration to involvement
- Encourage participation
- Support actions and campaigns

Leadership Development

- Help develop future site leaders
- Create broader ownership of chapter work

INFORMAL CONFERENCE PREP



School/Department: _____

Date of Informal Conference: _____

Grievant(s): _____

Chapter Chair: _____

Representing Administration/LAUSD: _____

ISSUE

WITNESSES AND/OR RELEVANT EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF CONTRACT LANGUAGE VIOLATED

Article: _____ **Section:** _____

UNION ARGUMENT

REMEDY REQUESTED

PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS DURING INFORMAL