

Why Start A Political Action Committee (PAC)

A PAC is a committee of your Association activists (3-7 members on average) who will do the actual political/campaign organizing for the Association before, during, and after the election is over.

This may include, but may not be limited to the following duties:

- Working with the CTA Political Organizer on creating a Campaign Plan and Budget
- Creating and conducting the candidate recommendation process for board of trustee endorsements
- Educating, Agitating and Organizing Association members to get involved in the Association campaign to take back the board of trustees
- Fundraising (campaign/PAC money) – level of involvement here depends on the type of PAC your Association forms (see 3 types of PACs)
- Develop program to continue maintaining and building relationships with elected school board members (even with those board members the Association did not endorse)
- Engage with other stakeholder groups to assist with candidate recruitment, endorsements and get out the vote (GOTV) efforts
- PAC Treasurer – will maintain records and report expenditures when necessary to the county office of elections (bi-annual reports)

The PAC is also the legal mechanism for collecting and dispersing funds in a campaign. While campaign reform legislation over the years has regulated PACs in order to keep the public informed as to the role of money in a political campaign, there are a number of advantages to your local Association of forming a Political Action Committee:

1. Forming a PAC will keep the political endorsement process above board and away from accusations regarding favoritism or patronage.
2. Having a PAC will keep all monetary and non-monetary contributions legal according to state and local law, state and federal tax laws, and CTA agency fee guidelines.
3. Having a PAC insulates the local from accusations of misuse of dues dollars, as all contributions and expenditures are reported to the county and are public record.
4. Having a PAC allows the local to communicate to voters outside of the Association membership. The PAC can even “slate” candidates even if the candidates aren’t working together. Voters need to know who and what our members are supporting. We can help them make the connections by campaigning for our recommended candidates together or slated. The PAC can also support local issues like bond measures and parcel taxes which having a PAC allows us to do legally.
5. And lastly, having a PAC allows the local Association to be involved in other races, such as City Council or Board of Supervisors, to advance pro-public- education issues and to develop coalitions with the broader community.

Establishing and maintaining a PAC need not be difficult or burdensome for the local. Thoughtful planning and careful record keeping will make this a positive addition to the other mechanisms that your chapter institutes to be more effective and powerful in advocating for your members, your students and your schools!

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CTA