

UTW Pro Rep Handbook 2023-2024

Table of Contents	Page #
UTW Officers and Office Info	2
UTW Pro Rep, Eboard, and BOE Meeting Dates	3
UTW Affiliates Flow Chart	4
Pro Rep Duties	5
UTW Standing Committees	7
Sharing Information	8
How to Plan a 10-minute Meeting	9
KNEA/AFT Member Benefits	11
Building Committee Tips	12
Sample Building Committee Bylaws	19
BC Agenda..Meeting..Minutes	23
Building Committee Tips from former BC Chairs	26
Sample Emails for Members	27
How to use Google Form to solicit agenda items	29

UTW Officers

President: Katie Warren
Vice President: Mike Harris
Secretary: Gabe Padilla
Treasurer: Allen Gallaway

Executive Board


Jessica Amir
Shana Balton
Heather Brown
LaKiesha Brooks
Robert Castleberry
Jennifer Porter
Noel Lucero
Cal Siebenmark
Valerie Wills
Diane Smith

UTW Office Information

Address: 150 S. Ida, Wichita, KS 67211
Phone: 316-262-5171
Web site: www.utw-ks.org
KNEA UniServ Director: Greg Jones gjones@utw-ks.org
UTW/AFT-KS Organizer: Bill Mason bmason@utw-ks.org
KNEA/UTW Administrative Assistant: Rebecca Denton rdenton@utw-ks.org
UTW Office Assistant: Shelby Espinosa sespinosa@utw-ks.org

Executive Board UTW Office 150 S Ida, 67211 5:00 p.m.	Membership Committee UTW Office 150 S Ida, 67211 5:00 p.m.	Pro Rep Machinist Hall 3830 S Meridian, 67217 5:00 p.m.	COPE Committee UTW Office 150 S Ida, 67211 5:00 p.m.
<i>Monday, August 7, 2023</i>	<i>Thursday, August 10, 2023</i>	<i>Monday, August 21, 2023</i>	<i>Tuesday, August 29, 2023</i>
<i>Tuesday, September 5, 2023 4p.m.</i>	<i>Thursday, September 7, 2023</i>	<i>Monday, September 25, 2023</i>	<i>Tuesday, September 26, 2023</i>
<i>Monday, October 9, 2023</i>	<i>October TBD</i>	<i>Monday, October 23, 2023</i>	<i>Tuesday, October 24, 2023</i>
<i>Monday, November 6, 2023</i>	<i>Thursday, November 9, 2023</i>	<i>Monday, November 20, 2023</i>	<i>Tuesday, November 28, 2023</i>
<i>Monday, December 4, 2023</i>	<i>Thursday, December 7, 2023</i>	<i>no December Meeting</i>	<i>no December Meeting</i>
<i>Monday, January 8, 2024</i>	<i>Thursday, January 11, 2024</i>	<i>Monday, January 29, 2024</i>	<i>Tuesday, January 30, 2024</i>
<i>Monday, February 5, 2024</i>	<i>February TBD</i>	<i>Monday, February 26, 2024</i>	<i>Tuesday, February 27, 2024</i>
<i>Tuesday, March 5, 2024</i>	<i>Thursday, March 7, 2024</i>	<i>no March Meeting</i>	<i>Tuesday, March 26, 2024</i>
<i>Monday, April 1, 2024</i>	<i>Thursday, April 11, 2024</i>	<i>Monday, April 22, 2024</i>	<i>Tuesday, April 30, 2024</i>
<i>Tuesday, May 7, 2024</i>	<i>Thursday, May 9, 2024</i>	<i>Monday, May 13, 2024</i>	<i>Tuesday, May 21, 2024</i>

Affiliation Flow Chart

 **United Teachers**
OF WICHITA
Creating Tomorrow Together

www.utw-ks.org utw@utw-ks.org
150 S. Ida, Wichita, KS 67211 262-5171

President: Katie Warren
Vice President: Mike Harris

AFT-Kansas

www.kape.org

Kansas Association of Public Employees
1300 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka KS 66612

President: Sarah Lafrenz

KNEA

www.KNEA.org

Kansas National Education Association
715 SW 10th Street, Topeka, KS 66612

President: Sherri Schwanz

AFT

www.aft.org

American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington DC 20001

President: Randi Weingarten

NEA

www.nea.org

National Education Association
1201 16thst. NW Washington DC 20036

President: Becky Pringle

Pro Rep Duties

Each Professional Representative shall be elected by the United Teachers of Wichita members in his/her building and shall serve as the key contact with members of United Teachers of Wichita at the building level, reflecting the wishes of members when feasible, but having full authority to make decisions for such respective members.

The number of Professional Representatives to be elected by each building shall be determined by the number of current active members based in that building.

Each building having more than ten (10) active members shall be entitled to elect one additional Professional Representative for each additional ten (10) members or major fraction thereof.

When a building becomes eligible for an additional Professional Representative during the membership year, the building or group shall be entitled to elect an additional Professional Representative immediately. Immediately upon the decline of United Teachers of Wichita memberships in a building or group, such building or group will lose a proportionate number of Professional Representatives.

After open nominations, all Professional Representatives shall be elected by secret ballot by building members.

In buildings having two (2) or more Professional Representatives, the elected Professional Representatives shall elect, by secret ballot, a lead representative.

A building may elect as its Professional Representative any active United Teachers of Wichita member based at that building.

The Professional Representative(s) of each respective building shall be responsible for the election of a new Professional Representative(s) before September 1 of the year in which terms expire. The name(s) of the Professional Representative(s) shall be reported to the office of United Teachers of Wichita.

The Professional Representatives shall:

- Enroll new members of United Teachers of Wichita;
- Inform members regarding professional activities, services, achievements, and developments;
- Represent their members' interests, needs, and wishes at United Teachers of Wichita meetings,
- Stimulate participation in United Teachers of Wichita activities among the membership;
- Reflect the wishes of their buildings in making recommendations for committee appointments and in nominating and voting for members to elective positions when required by the Bylaws;

- Conduct elections in accordance with the election procedures of the United Teachers of Wichita;
- Provide, in accordance with the Teachers Employment Agreement, for the fulfillment of duties connected with the School Building Committee;
- Assume, at the request of a member and in accordance with the Teachers Employment Agreement, responsibilities in relation to grievance procedure at the appropriate level as they affect aggrieved building personnel, and to accompany such persons (upon their request) to the Building Principal or immediate superior.

Term of Office

The term of office shall be for one year, starting no later than September 1.

Vacancies: Whenever a vacancy among the elected Professional Representatives from the building or group occurs, the UTW members based at that building or in that group shall elect by secret ballot, majority vote, a new Professional Representative at once. Where there is not another Professional Representative, the President or designee shall conduct the election.

[Taken verbatim from UTW's Constitution and Bylaws, pgs 14-1

Standing UTW Committees 2021-2022

- Committee on Political Action (COPE)
- Membership Committee
- Election Committee
- Constitution and Bylaws Committee
- Budget and Audit Committee

Other UTW Committees

- Racial and Social Justice Committee
- Communications Committee

Communication with members

SHARING INFORMATION...

UTW members need information, and you will be in a position to give it to them. Information will come to you in various forms, and you need to find effective ways to share that information with the members in your building. Here are the most common ways of sharing information:

Email – *Much information can be quickly shared via email to one's colleagues. We suggest setting up a member distribution list to make this task easier.*

Building meetings - These can be short, 10-minute meetings that you hold to share information you have received from Pro Rep meetings or other UTW staff (see handout on a 10-minute meeting), or to address concerns that need to be discussed by UTW members. You might also wish to invite someone from the UTW office out to speak with the members and listen to their issues.

Stuffing mailboxes – While we communicate primarily through electronic mediums, sometimes we send out things through interschool mail. You or another Pro Rep in your building will need to place these items in mailboxes.

Bulletin Boards - Your building needs a visible, well maintained bulletin board that has current information about UTW. Identify the building reps, important phone numbers, UTW officers, and any building meetings for UTW members. Other important information to include would be benefit flyers and membership promotion items the UTW office sends out. Contact UTW for materials and assistance.

On Your Mark, Get Set, Meet!!!

How to Plan an Effective Ten-Minute Unit Meeting

Pro Reps who hold regular meetings - especially in difficult times – have the best shot at strengthening membership. “But they won’t stay for a meeting,” you complain. “They say they’re too busy.” We have the solution!

Try promising a 10-minute meeting - timed by the clock. You must rule with an "iron hand" and few words, but you can do it! Short meetings will inform and allow members to have a voice and the knowledge that their opinions count in the decision-making process and will make it easier for you to vote at Pro Rep meetings because you will have an idea of the opinion of the members at the work site and these quick meetings will also help to build member consensus.

The quick meeting sample agenda below allows members to have the opportunity to air concerns by writing their questions and concerns and turning them in at the end of the meeting. The Pro Rep can then talk on an individual basis with those who write down their concerns. Make these meetings snappy and business-like!

Ten Minute Meeting Agenda

Minutes	Topic	Notes
2 minutes (Minutes 1-2)	<p>Brief overview of major topics discussed at last PR meeting.</p> <p><i>We are keeping members informed. Keeping members informed is not a matter of how much they are told, but rather a feeling that leaders are working hard to keep them informed.</i></p>	
4 Minutes (Minutes 3-6)	<p>Here is a current issue. We need your consensus before we go to the next PR meeting where we will submit your collective views.</p> <p><i>The mere process of getting members' consensus reinforces in the members' minds that their opinion is actively sought and presented to the voting body. If you neglect this step, you may have mistrust and hostility from your members.</i></p>	
3 Minutes (Minutes 7-9)	<p>A 3-minute review of a current issue that is close to the heart and soul and guts of members in this building.</p> <p><i>This may not be the burning issue that came up at the PR meeting, but the members need to feel that the Union is conscious of their needs. The individual member needs to have time spent on a topic that is important to him or her.</i></p>	
1 Minute (Minute 10)	<p>We are having some success in this area, or we're optimistic in this area, due to your efforts. Keep up the good work!!</p> <p>Praise. Encourage. Nourish the members toward developing a spirit of optimism. An "all is lost" attitude will eventually kill support for the Union's goals — especially during negotiations.</p>	

Time's up! We told you we could do it in 10 minutes! Do not forget to leave your questions and suggestions at the door.

Member Benefits

In addition to legal representation and contract negotiations, there are plenty of benefits to being a UTW member. Follow the links for a list of standard benefits you get for joining.

- <https://knea.accessdevelopment.com/>
- <https://www.neamb.com/>
- <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>
- Peer Consultant Program (intensive one-on-one assistance for most first-year teachers)
- Professional Development (varies)
- USD 259 PD Points for attending any non-political UTW meeting.

Please contact Shelby Espinosa for assistance with your AFT and KNEA member ID numbers which you will need to gain access to the benefits on the links above. sespinosa@utw-ks.org, or call 316-262-5171.



UTW Building Committee Tips

*The Building Committee is a collaborative, UTW Pro-Rep Teacher led group comprised of teachers, a classified person, and the building principal. The reason for the existence of the Building Committee is to improve the communication between faculty/staff and administration. In order for the Building Committee to be effective, the entire staff must see the Building Committee as a vehicle for expressing their views. The most effective Building Committee operates as a sounding board for the principal, not a gripe session for faculty/staff. It is important to move past the complaints and into a **collaborative** discussion to find solutions as quickly as possible.*

- *(From the contract)* The purpose of the School Building Committee shall be to identify problems at the building level and to work in an advisory capacity to the principal toward acceptable solutions. The School Building Committee shall involve itself in:
 - a) Problems relating to rules, procedures, policies, safety and security of pupils and teachers within the building, and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the school.
 - b) The planning, implementation, and evaluation of authorized building-based inservice programs.
 - c) Planning for those meetings involving pupils, parents, and community patrons.
 - d) The use of building staff allocation and scheduling.
 - e) Discussions and recommendations for revisions to the school discipline plan prior to its adoption and publication by the building principal.

- BC agenda items need to promote discussions about daily classroom life. If there are concerns about how to implement a particular program or grant, and that concern affects more than one person, discuss it in building committee.

- The Building Committee is the contractually recognized voice of the staff in the building. It is the *responsibility* of the Building Committee to express the viewpoint of the staff *to the building administration*.

- The Building Committee is not there to only discuss problems. They are to advise the principal on many issues, including scheduling, use of allocation, and discipline. *By discussing issues before they are problems, problems might be avoided.*

- A Building Committee should strive to be positive and proactive, not negative, and reactive. In order for the Building Committee to be effective, the entire staff must see the Building Committee as a vehicle for expressing their views.
- Reports about other committees (team leaders, grade level chairs, dept. heads, etc.) can and should be provided to the building committee in order to avoid duplication of issues that they might have already discussed, or be aware of, and with which they already agree.
- The Building Committee Chairperson runs the meeting, sets the agenda, etc.
- Remember, the administration has several different avenues for getting its agenda discussed with teachers, such as staff meetings, team leaders, department chairs, daily bulletins, etc. The Building Committee is the only guaranteed avenue available to teachers that they can control.

Timeline for Possible Issues

August/September

- Evaluation – process, implementation, professional development
- Professional Development times and activities
- School wide discipline plan
- Scheduling
- Open House
- Inservices
- Conferences
- Required night meetings
- Discuss Make-up policy (Student Work)
- Discuss staff committees (remember they are voluntary)
- Review Bylaws

October/November/December

- Review Open House and analyze how successful it was
- Review conferences and analyze how successful they were
- Review school wide discipline and discuss any necessary changes for second semester
- Begin discussions about major change for next year, including schedule, site focus, etc. This is a complex issue, it takes time.

January

- Continue discussions about major changes, if any, for next year
- Review Inservice plans

February

- Discuss end of school year activities

March/April

- Review and analyze conferences
- Continue discussions about major changes, if any, for next year

- Discuss UTW Environment / Workload survey

April/May

- Review Discipline plans for next year and anything else that will be printed prior to the start of school in August
- Recommend any necessary changes for the bylaws so next year's building committee can begin the year with those changes in effect.
- Discuss schedule for next year's pre-school report days
- Discuss with principal how to be involved in the summer planning for next year

Any daily classroom life issue that concerns more than one person may be brought to Building Committee. Questions/concerns/comments about curriculum, forms, professional development – anything – can be raised for discussion in Building Committee.

ARTICLE XVI: SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Section A: Purpose

Paragraph 1: The purpose of the School Building Committee shall be to identify problems at the building level and to work in an advisory capacity to the principal toward acceptable solutions.

The School Building Committee shall involve itself in:

- a) Problems relating to rules, procedures, policies, safety and security of pupils and teachers within the building, and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the school.
- b) The planning, implementation, and evaluation of authorized building-based inservice programs.
- c) Planning for those meetings involving pupils, parents, and community patrons.
- d) The use of building staff allocation and scheduling.
- e) Discussions and recommendations for revisions to the school discipline plan prior to its adoption and publication by the building principal.

Section B: Organization

Paragraph 1: A School Building Committee shall be organized at each school attendance center as designated by this Article.

Paragraph 2: Membership of the School Building Committee shall consist of the following:

- a. Chairperson
 - i. The UTW Professional Representative (Pro Rep) or his/her designee shall serve as chairperson.
 - ii. If the Pro Rep/designee declines to be chairperson, the committee shall elect a chairperson.
- b. The principal
- c. Classified staff person

- d. Teachers elected by and from the teachers based at the building
- e. The number of committee members, in addition to the chairperson, principal and the classified member, shall be based on the following school enrollment:

Number of Enrollment Members

400 or fewer	3
401 to 800	5
801 to 1200	7
1201 to 1600	9
1601 to 2000	11
2001 or more	13

- f. At least one teacher who is a member of the School Building Committee shall be appointed by the building principal to serve on the site council.

Paragraph 3: Election of the School Building Committee shall be as follows:

- a. The election shall be conducted by the UTW or its designee prior to September 10 of each year.
- b. All certified staff are eligible to vote for the teacher nominees
- c. One classified staff member shall be elected to serve on the committee and will be elected by the classified members assigned to the building.
- d. The elected members shall serve until a new committee is elected the following year.

Paragraph 4: Committee members shall be reported by September 20 of each year by the chairperson to UTW.

Section C: Bylaws

Paragraph 1: Each School Building Committee shall annually adopt its own bylaws subject to ratification by all certified staff based at the building. Such bylaws shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. A procedure for nomination of committee members.
- b. A procedure for election of committee members by secret ballot before September 10 of each year.
- c. A procedure for the selection of officers other than the chairperson.
- d. A procedure for filling committee vacancies.
- e. A procedure for calling meetings, which shall be held at least once a month during the school year.
- f. A procedure for setting of an agenda.
- g. A procedure for notifying teachers of building meetings, place, date, and agenda.

- h. Provisions for school patrons, including pupils, or other citizens residing in the school attendance area to suggest items for the agenda and, subject to reasonable regulations of the committee, to meet with the committee to discuss items of concern.
- i. A procedure for distributing minutes following each meeting.

Paragraph 2: The current bylaws adopted by the School Building Committee and ratified by the teachers shall be filed with UTW.

Section D: General Rules

Paragraph 1: Any faculty/staff member may submit to any committee member in the building, a written statement, signed or unsigned, of a problem for consideration by the committee, which shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Paragraph 2: Any item may be placed on the agenda by any committee member, including informal requests by another faculty/staff member.

Paragraph 3: Individual teachers may have a hearing before an ad hoc subcommittee of his/her choice for data input prior to consideration of a regular School Building Committee meeting.

Paragraph 4: The principal may provide the School Building Committee with secretarial services as may be available and agreed upon by the principal and the committee.

Paragraph 5: All School Building Committee meetings shall be open to all faculty/staff of the building.

Paragraph 6: No provision of this Article is to be interpreted in a fashion that would abridge the rights of any individual as established in this agreement or the statutory rights or responsibilities of the Superintendent or the Board.

Paragraph 7: The principal shall provide reports to the School Building Committee upon request regarding the activities of any committee which is in part or wholly composed of teachers that is appointed by the principal and which does not deal with confidential matters.

Keys to a Good Building Committee

- Multiple grade level representation
- Special Ed / Specials / Electives representation
- UTW representation beyond just the Chairperson
- Classified personnel representation
- Scheduled dates & time for the entire year on the calendar
- Adequate solicitation of agenda items for BC
- Adequate feedback to staff regarding BC mtg. (minutes)
- Members set up to receive PD points in My Learning Plan

Keys to a Good Building Committee Meeting

- Starts and finishes on time
- Chairperson
 - ❖ Shares tentative agenda with the principal ahead of time in case some items can be addressed / dismissed easily before the meeting
 - ❖ runs the meeting
 - ❖ calls to order
 - ❖ introduces agenda items
 - ❖ discourages / prohibits any comments or discussions involving personnel
 - ❖ encourages input from ALL members—even those on the quiet or shy side
 - ❖ calls for a vote on items & issues (with the understanding that the BC and its work operates in an advisory capacity)
 - ❖ concludes the meeting
- Members
 - ❖ Keep good minutes of the meeting (one person's task)
 - ❖ Bring the concerns of their colleagues into their participation
 - ❖ Participate fully, not allowing any one or two people to dominate discussion
 - ❖ Acknowledge that they are 'hearing' what others are sharing
 - ❖ Contribute opinions respectfully
- Principal
 - ❖ Attends all meetings
 - ❖ Participates as a member
 - ❖ Demonstrates a respect for the input of his/her staff

Impediments to a Good Building Committee Meeting

- Lack of organization & planning

- Chair's lack of control of the meeting
- Apathy/Cynicism/Fear of staff with regards to value of input
- Resistant / Defensive Principal

Sample Bylaws for School Building Committee

Bylaws of the _____ School Building Committee

Article I. Name

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be “ _____
School Building Committee.”

Article II. Purpose

Section 1. To identify problems at the building level and to advise the principal of acceptable solutions to:

- A. Problems relating to rules, procedures, policies, safety and security of pupils and teachers within the building, and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the building.
- B. The planning, implementation, and evaluation of authorized building-based inservice programs.
- C. Planning for those meetings involving pupils, parents, and community patrons.
- D. The use of building allocation and scheduling.
- E. Discussions and recommendations for revisions to the school discipline plan prior to its adoption and publication by the building principal.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. According to the Teachers’ Agreement, the number of committee members, in addition to the chairperson, principal and classified member, shall be based on the following school enrollment:

<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
400 or fewer	3
401 to 800	5
801 to 1200	7
1201 to 1600	9
1601 to 2000	11
2001 or more	13

Article IV. Officers

Section 1. Chairperson: The UTW Lead Pro Rep, or his/her designee, shall chair serve as chairperson of the committee with the right to vote.

Section 2. Secretary: The secretary shall be elected by a majority vote of the Building Committee. The principal may choose to provide the committee with secretarial services.

Section 3. Vice-Chairperson: The vice-chair shall be elected by a majority of the Building Committee.

Article V. Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Nominations and elections shall take place at a building staff meeting. All teachers assigned to _____ school are eligible for nomination and election.

Section 2. Elections for members to the School Building Committee shall be by secret ballot and will be held on or before September 10. Elected teachers shall serve until a new committee is elected the following year.

Section 3. The election will be conducted by the UTW Pro Reps in _____ School.

Section 4. Building Committee members will be elected to at-large positions for one-year terms.

(It is the opinion of UTW that term limits for building committee are a violation of a teacher's rights to be elected to the building committee.)

(If your school chooses to elect members by grade level, departments, or some other configuration, please be aware that the total number of voting members on the committee is determined by the contract.)

Article VI. Vacancies

Section 1. When a vacancy occurs on the School Building Committee, other than the chairperson, the _____ will elect a replacement for the position left vacant.

Section 2. A vacancy occurring in the office of chairperson will be handled according to the provisions of the Master Contract.

Section 3. A vacancy occurring in other offices of the committee, other than chairperson, will be replaced at the following meeting by an election of the committee.

Article VII. Meetings

Section 1. Meetings shall be scheduled at least one (1) time each month during the regular school year.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by any member of the Building Committee by requesting such a meeting to the chairperson of the committee.

- Section 3. Notice of the meeting, and the agenda, shall be given to all staff at least two days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Section 4. The building committee shall, within reason, accommodate requests by pupils, school patrons, and other citizens residing in the school attendance area to discuss items of concern.
- Section 5. Meetings can occur virtually if health and/or safety conditions warrant doing so.

Article VIII. Agendas

- Section 1. Items for the School Building Committee agenda shall be in the hands of the chairperson no later than three (3) days preceding a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Section 2. During the Covid-19 pandemic, items related to health and safety can/should be brought to the immediate attention of building committee members. If the issue or issues cannot wait until the next schedule meeting, or cannot be easily remedied otherwise, these pressing agenda items can be taken up in a special Building Committee meeting. (See Article VII, Section D above)
- Section 3. Agenda items may be submitted to or by any Building Committee member in writing, signed or unsigned, or verbally.
- Section 4. The agenda shall be posted or distributed to the staff at least two days prior to the meeting.

Article IX. Minutes

- Section 1. The minutes of the building committee meetings shall be reviewed and approved by the chairperson prior to distribution.
- Section 2. The minutes shall be distributed to all staff no later than three (3) days after a meeting.

Article X. Quorum

- Section 1. A quorum must be present in order to conduct business.
- Section 2. A quorum at any meeting shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the building committee.

Article XI. Contractual Rights and Obligations

- Section 1. Nothing in these bylaws shall negate a right guaranteed to a teacher by the Master Agreement.
- Section 2. These bylaws shall be adopted annually by the Building Committee, subject to ratification by the teachers based at this building.

Section 3. The principal shall appoint one member of the Building Committee to be on the Site Council.

About the Agenda . . .

- Solicit items from all staff a week before the meeting.
- Items can be submitted to a Pro Rep orally, in writing, or electronically and they can be signed or anonymous. (See document on How to Solicit Agenda Items with a Google Form)
- Tell staff you reserve the right to
 - combine like concerns
 - use your own words in putting the agenda together
 - eliminate items already resolved
 - eliminate personnel related items
- Members who submit items anonymously should be warned that, if you do not understand completely what the issue is, or if you have a question and cannot get more information, that item might not be included on the agenda.
- If you need more clarification, and know who submitted it, get that clarification.
- Staff should be highly encouraged to include a possible solution(s) along with their concern.
- Set a deadline for agenda item submissions so that you have time to put the agenda together.
- Compose the agenda using your own words. Use an order that works best for you. (Some like to save the tough items for the end, and others prefer getting to that right away.)
- Share the agenda with the principal at least 24 hours before the meeting. Some issues can (and therefore should) be handled before the meeting. And the principal should not be blindsided by items on the agenda.
- Some Pro Reps like to send the agenda (after having shared with the principal) to all staff. If staff knows what will be up for discussion, they will be more interested in and have better clarity when reading the minutes of the meeting later.
- Consider using the electronic version of the agenda as the template for your meeting's minutes.

About the Meeting . . .

- The chair can recruit a BC member to keep minutes, or the committee itself can decide.
- The chair is wise to err on the side of formality. It can help move the meeting along efficiently as well as keep the discussions of the more difficult items more professional in nature.
- The chair also . . .
 - ❖ starts and finishes on time
 - ❖ recruits a BC member to keep minutes, or the committee itself can decide
 - ❖ runs the meeting
 - ❖ works to keep it as positive and professional as possible
 - ❖ calls to order
 - ❖ introduces agenda items
 - ❖ discourages / prohibits any comments or discussions involving personnel
 - ❖ encourages input from ALL members—even those on the quiet or shy side
 - ❖ works hard to keep all discussion focused, as positive as possible, and solution driven
 - ❖ makes a motion on items & issues
 - ❖ concludes the meeting
- Members
 - ❖ bring the concerns of their colleagues into their participation
 - ❖ participate fully, not allowing any one or two people to dominate discussion
 - ❖ make a motion on items & issues
 - ❖ acknowledge that they are 'hearing' what others are sharing
 - ❖ contribute opinions respectfully
- Principal
 - ❖ attends all meetings
 - ❖ participates as a member
 - ❖ demonstrates a respect for the input of his/her staff

About the Minutes . .

- Use an electronic copy of the agenda as the basis of your minutes.
- Record the meeting's start time and stop times.
- Next to each Agenda item, record key points of discussion.
- Stop the meeting for clarification or time to get something important recorded, if needed.
- Record any motion made, including
 - who makes the motion
 - who seconds the motion and
 - the result of the vote
- After the meeting, clean up your copy. Avoid too much or too little information.
- Send the minutes to the BC Chair.
- Chair reviews and distributes minutes to the entire staff.

Building Committee Tips from former BC Chairs . . .

1. Make sure the principal sees you as the UTW leader in the building. Allow the status of the position to be an advantage.
2. Work with principal ahead of time to pick one positive and one challenge. Celebrate the positive and finds solutions for the negatives.
3. Begin every meeting with a reminder of BC's purpose and positive focus on problem solving. Disarm defensiveness constantly.
4. Talk to BC members before the meeting and reinforce support for one another and encourage participation. Pre-load conversations to facilitate positive problem solving.
5. If the principal does not seem interested in meeting, or seems to have trouble making it to meetings, proceed anyway. Let the minutes reflect all discussed, all votes, etc. as well as those in attendance.
6. It is never easy being the person to deal with these matters. Breathe deeply and remember your purpose (improving the lives of young people). You could even use the mantra 'How does this impact our teaching, or impact students?' to keep focused.
7. It's difficult to give helpful advice, because so much depends on the principal's personality and how it plays into how they respond to professional input about things they don't want much input on. I guess it's worth all the effort to work on that relationship with the principal, so they know you have good intentions.
8. When dealing with sensitive items regarding administration that are on the work environment survey, it sometimes helps to look for trends over the past few years. We had a couple of awkward years with one principal, but I found that being able to lead with something positive helped the discussion. I also tried to remind him that the survey results reflected the perception of the staff and that it was our collective job as BC to a) identify why there was a disconnect between staff perceptions and his perceptions and b) develop ways to eliminate that disconnect. I think that approaching it that way allowed him to save a little face. I knew that **HE** was the problem, but if I could get him to change his behaviors by letting him think that the staff was perceiving them incorrectly, then I accomplished my goal of changing his behaviors.
9. The keys are a solid agenda, a meeting with real issues, real discussion, real suggestions, real motions & votes on solutions, and solid minutes distributed to staff as soon as possible after the meeting.
10. The way I always approach tough topics, and frankly, the way I introduce BC to a new principal is that we are here to work WITH you and advise you, not to beat you up.

Letter to staff re BC formation

Hi everyone,

We are going to get a Building Committee up and running here at XXXXXX and your help is needed. As the contract states, "The purpose of the School Building Committee shall be to identify problems at the building level and to work in an advisory capacity to the principal toward acceptable solutions." (If you would like to read more, check the contract, pages 55-57).

The more diverse the group, the better our school will be represented by all interested parties. We are allowed X more members in addition to the BC chair, the principal, and a classified representative. So, it would be great if those X members represented upper grades, lower grades, special education, specials, and support staff.

Please reply if you are interested in serving.

For most members, this commitment should not take more than 1 hour a month. And yet, all together, we will have an opportunity to discuss openly, honestly, and professionally 'problems at the building level' and help offer 'acceptable solutions.'

I look forward to hearing from you.

1st letter to staff re BC & Agenda items

Hi everyone,

We have put a Building Committee together here at XXX and your help is needed. As the contract states, "The purpose of the School Building Committee shall be to identify problems at the building level and to work in an advisory capacity to the principal toward acceptable solutions." (If you would like to read more, check the contract, pages 55-57).

We will have our first meeting on XXX and I invite you to submit items for the agenda. If we really want to work together to make this a better school, we all must realize our input matters and is valued. And those of us on the committee need to make sure we discuss, debate, and offer possible solutions to problems that we see. You may submit agenda items by replying to this email or by submitting them anonymously to me.

Please keep the following in mind as you think about and submit items for the agenda:

- BC can discuss all things related to the operation of the school except personnel issues. If your question or concern involves how people are doing or not doing their jobs, you will have to work a bit harder to compose your concerns in a way that does not single out individuals.
- If you are pointing out a problem or issue, be succinct and specific. And consider also offering a possible solution. Doing so can facilitate our discussion at the meeting.
- I reserve the right to combine similar items or issues into one BC agenda item. I also will put agenda items in my own words to facilitate an efficient meeting.

Letter re BC agenda items

Hi everyone,

XXX (date) is our Building Committee meeting and I invite you to submit items for the agenda. First, as a reminder, please note that the contract states, “The purpose of the School Building Committee shall be to identify problems at the building level and to work in an advisory capacity to the principal toward acceptable solutions.” (If you would like to read more, check the contract, pages 55-57). If we really want to work together to make this a better school, we all must realize our input matters and is valued. And those of us on the committee need to make sure we discuss, debate, and offer possible solutions to problems that we see.

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Thanks.

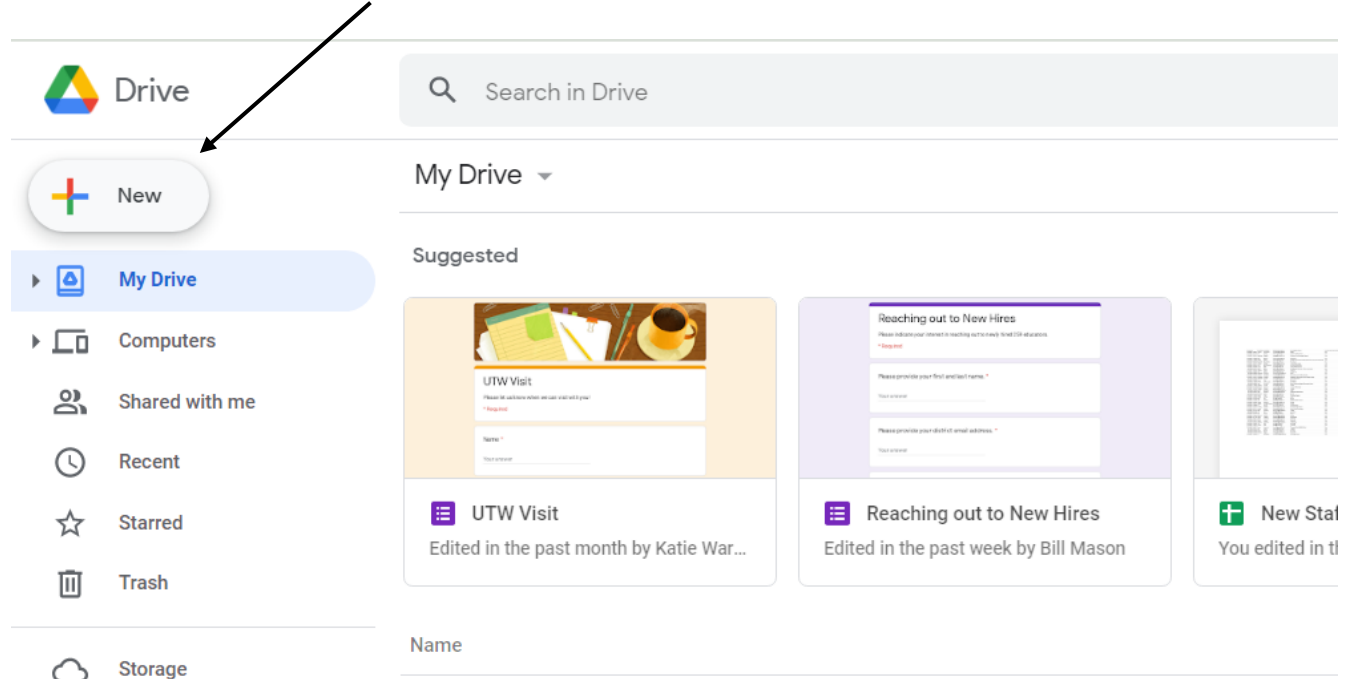
How to Solicit BC Agenda Items using a Google Form

One easy way to solicit items for the BC agenda is to send an email out to the staff with a link to a Google form. It can be created so that those who submit items may or may not include their names. Here's how to create the Google form for agenda item submissions:

Log into Google.

Go to www.drive.google.com

Next click New and then click Google Forms.



Now you have a blank google form template.

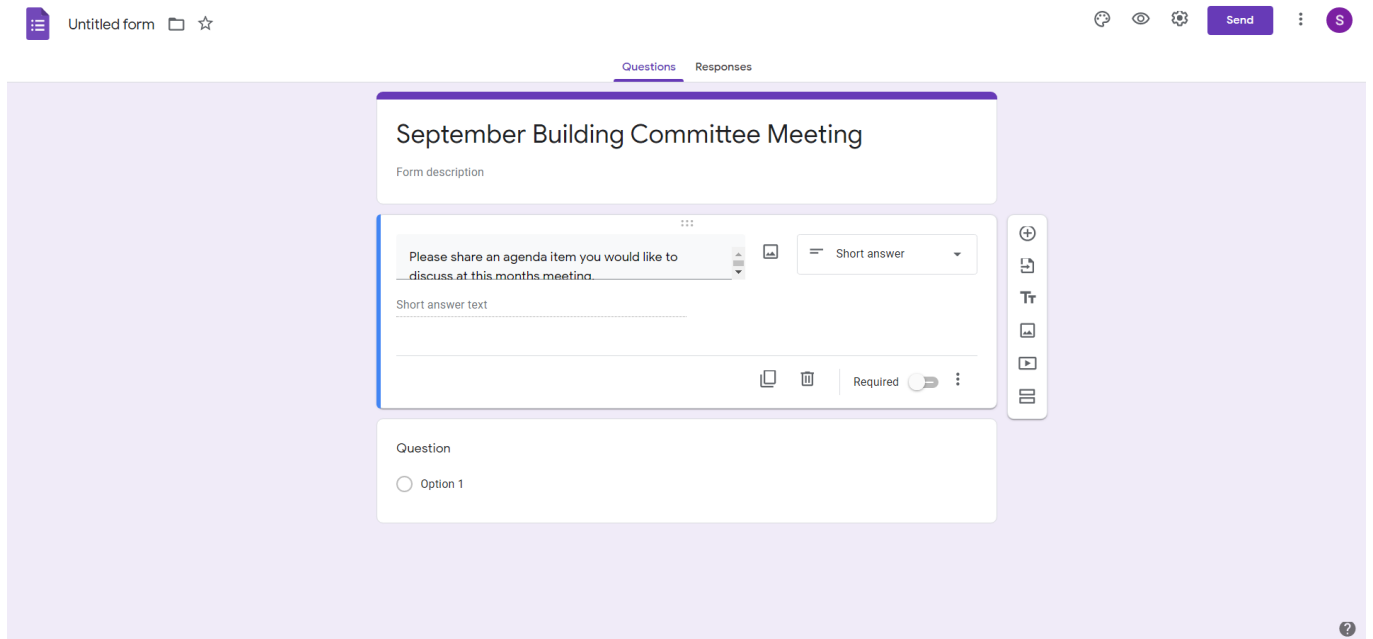
Title the form.

Select 'Short Answer' for the first question type and write, "If you would like, please provide your name." Make sure 'required' is not marked in the bottom right of the question box.

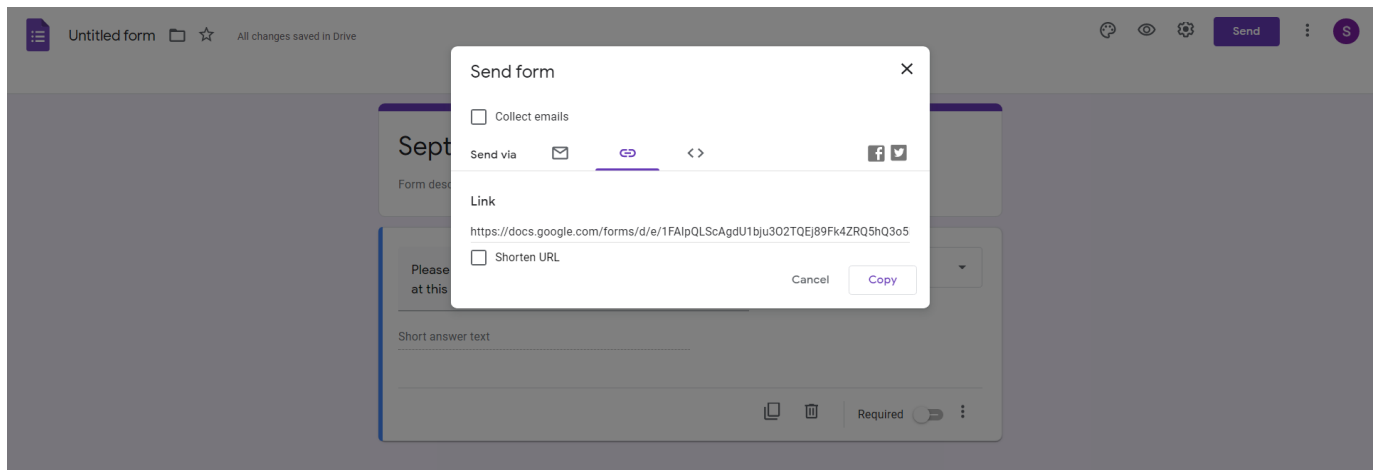
Add the next question by clicking the plus icon.

Mark the second question 'short answer' also.

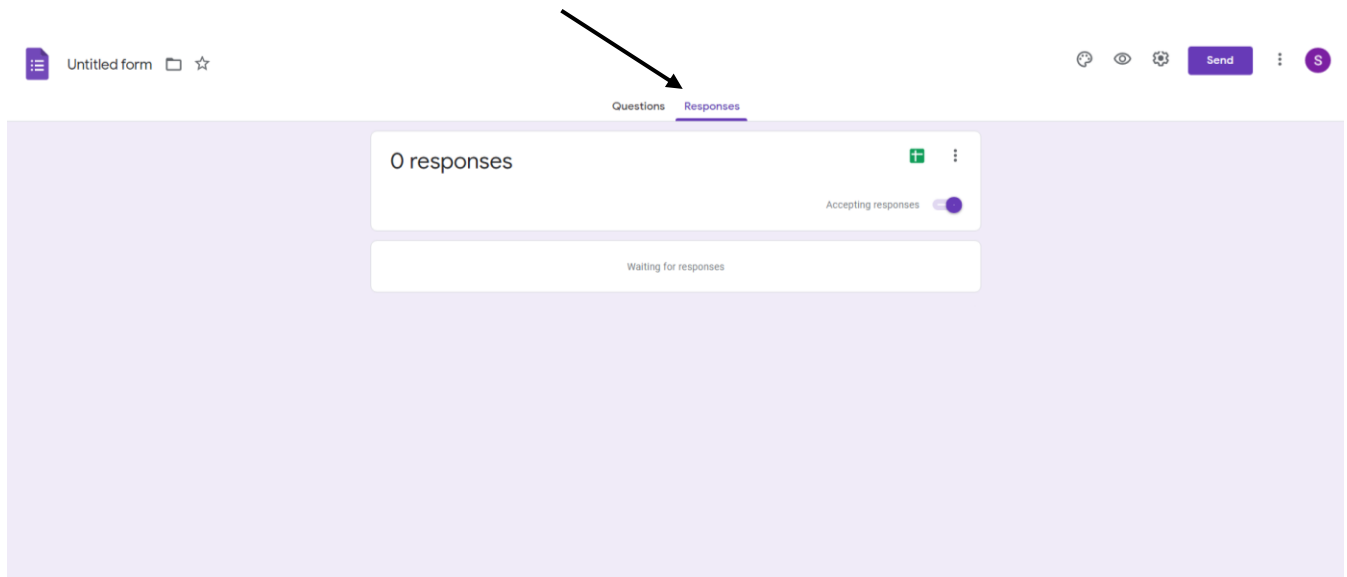
Write a sentence something like this: "Please briefly state your question, concern, or issue for consideration at BC. Please remember personnel issues cannot be discussed in BC. And please offer a possible solution that might help drive some discussion."



To share the form with your colleagues hit the send button, click the link option, copy the link, compose an email with district email and paste it in the message to your colleagues.

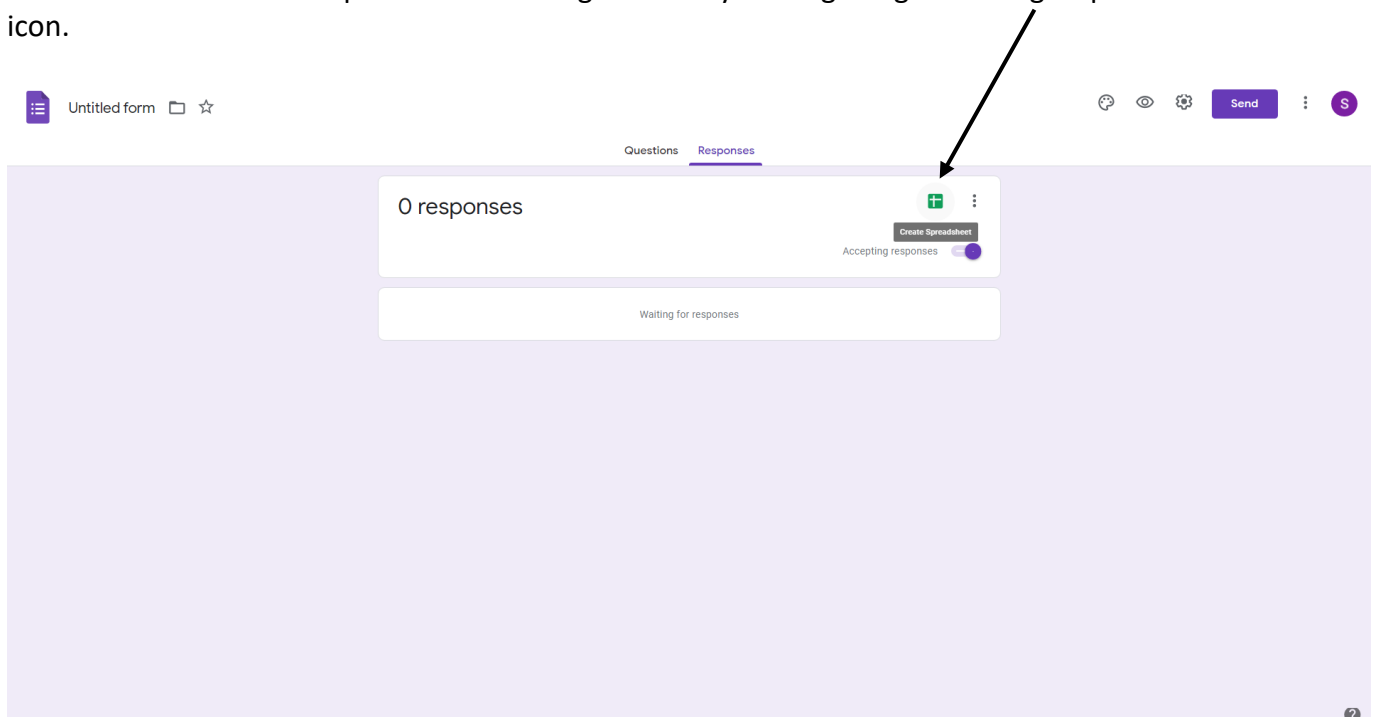


As responses come in, or after your deadline, you can check them by clicking on 'Responses.'



If you are going to use this method, we encourage you to have a Pro Rep or UTW folder in your Google drive, so you can keep each separate month's Google form easily accessible.

You can download the responses into a Google sheet by clicking the green Google Spreadsheet icon.



Click create and the sheet will be saved in your Google Drive.

