

**Constructing “Progressive Unionism”  
Out of Three Frames**

<b>Industrial Unionism</b> <i>“Collective power to meet bread and butter needs and ensure fairness from management”</i>	<b>Professional Unionism</b> <i>“Control of the profession to ensure quality”</i>	<b>Social Justice Unionism</b> <i>“Equity for our students through active engagement in the community”</i>
Emphasizes separation of managerial and teaching work, job design and execution. “Boards make policy, managers manage, teachers teach.”	Emphasizes collective aspect of education work; blurs lines between, teaching & management; lead teachers, joint committees “All of us are smarter than any of us.”	Creates alliances with parents and the community to organize for social justice that will help all children succeed
Usually approaches labor-management relations as adversarial rather than collaborative. Represents teachers in defense and protection of their rights as workers; responds to teacher discontent.	Emphasizes the interdependence of workers and managers – “If you don’t look good, we don’t look good.”	Values parents and community activists as partners in school decision-making.
Values collective action (as power) in response to labor-management conflict; militant organizing as pressure tactic.	Values labor-management collaboration and partnership when useful in improving education and the profession in the public interest.	Takes a tactical view of labor-management cooperation based on circumstances
Win/lose, distributive bargaining	Interest-based bargaining, broad scope bargaining and other contracts; agreements outside contract.	Reaches out to the community for support for improving the quality of teaching
Limited scope bargaining, usually focused on salary, hours, and fair procedures	Union focused on professional development and quality of teaching/learning	Focuses on race and class challenges and the development of cultural competence and critical pedagogy.
Works to improve conditions of teaching and learning (Class size, adequate test books and supplies, hours, etc)	Emphasizes the protection and improvement of teaching, and quality control in the profession.	Asserts that all students can learn if adequate resources are available: school district funding as an equity issue.
Works to improve wages, benefits and retirement for all its members and negotiates equal treatment for all members	Empowers teachers to be instructional leaders and innovators and encourages teacher leaders to be given more responsibilities and more pay	Encourages teachers to make curriculum relevant to students’ lives; the union involves it members in broad social change
Emphasizes the protection of teachers – “rights-based” approach to resolving conflicts (grievances are an entitlement)	Argues that quality teaching is the critical factor in closing the achievement and that it is possible to define and measure quality teaching.	Argues for teacher empowerment in schools and districts.
Views the teacher contract as way to institutionalize all changes	Is willing to institutionalize change through the contract as well as exploring other forms	Change can only be institutionalized and sustained by organizing the rank and file and the community.
Principals & middle management decide when teachers have input into decisions.	Expands teacher decision-making and instructional leadership at school and district level	Democratic input by all stakeholders
Priority has protected against employer favoritism and must be kept at all cost	Willingness to look at expanded definitions of seniority to balance needs of the individual and the educational enterprise	No respect for seniority when it protects teachers who are not contributing to student achievement.