School Defense Committee Organizing Toolkit

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- **Handouts** – flyers, articles and talking points you can copy and share

- **Background reading** for the organizers of your group

- **Documents to help you set up leafleting or tabling at school events:** a volunteer schedule, a sign-in sheet to build your network of supporters, and a school-year calendar to chart upcoming events at your school.

For updates and a pdf of this toolkit, visit mtea.org or stopMPStakeover.com

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Goals for School Defense Committees
Check when done

☐ **Hold an informational event at school (like a walk-in)**

☐ **Invite others to be part of your School Defense Committee**

☐ **Host a gathering to kick off your School Defense Committee, get organized, and plan out the year (October 2015 is ideal)**

☐ **Create a communication structure (email group, Action Network group, phone or text tree, etc.)**

☐ **Create a calendar of who will table and/or leaflet at school events such as parent-teacher conferences, open house, math/literacy night, sports events, etc.**

☐ **Send 3-5 people to the citywide School Defense Committee summits on December 5, 2015 and February 20, 2016.**

☐ _____
   _____

☐ _____
   _____

☐ _____
   _____

Who should be a part of your School Defense Committee?
Fill in the names below.

Parents:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Educators (include teachers, paraprofessionals, safety assistants, speech/language, nurse, social worker, psychologist, etc.):

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Administrators: **Parent coordinator:**

_____   _____

_____   **School board representative:**

_____   _____

Alumni: **Parent teacher org/School governance:**

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Neighborhood Association members: **Student org. leaders/members:**

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Faith leaders: **Business leaders:**

_____   _____

_____   _____

List additional people on back as needed.

Ideas for your first School Defense Committee gathering

Hold a gathering at your school, someone's house, a public library, local restaurant, park or pavilion, etc.

Let people know ahead of time about the gathering. Create an online event for your gathering, and encourage people to RSVP using Action Network.

Invite key people (use the list you created of who should be on your School Defense Committee). Make phone calls and ask people to confirm their attendance in advance.

Consider having food at your event – ask for volunteers to bring refreshments or invite participants to bring a dish to pass.

Be sure to have each person who attends sign in.

Use the suggested agenda on the next page, and tailor it to your group. Keep the presentation and/or work session brief and informal.

Allow time to socialize and have fun together.

Think through activities that younger kids can do while adults are meeting, and a space for them to work or play. It is helpful to have some games, puzzles, or poster-making supplies handy.

Take pictures at your event. Get creative! If possible, include a sign that says "_____ School Defense Committee" or "_____ Supports Public Schools."

Suggested agenda for first School Defense Committee gathering

I. Brief discussion/presentation of what is wrong with the takeover
  Use flyers and literature provided:
  • "The public school takeover plan: what does it mean for our students and city?" flyer
  • "Why we oppose the takeover" article
  • "Public schools are at a tipping point" flyer

  Use the background articles included in this packet to inform your own knowledge. If you would like a presenter from Schools and Communities United or MTEA to attend your meeting, contact Amy Mizialko at 259-1990 or amizialko@wi.rr.com

II. Create a plan for inviting others to be part of your School Defense Committee
  Use worksheet titled "Who should be a part of your School Defense Committee."

III. Create a plan to inform and activate your school community
  • Use event calendar and tabling schedule to create your plan
  • Choose 5-10 people you will target to attend citywide School Defense Committee summits on December 5, 2015 and February 20, 2016.
  • Discuss different ways parents and supporters can get involved.

IV. Discuss how to communicate quickly within your group
  • Fill out the communication tree and discuss how you'll use it
  • Make a plan for using sign-up sheets at school events to add people to your network

IV. Discuss any possible roadblocks and how you will handle them

Communication Tree for _____ School

LEADER	LEADER
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
WILL CONTACT	**WILL CONTACT**
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone/txt:	Phone/txt:
Email:	Email: