

FEAdback

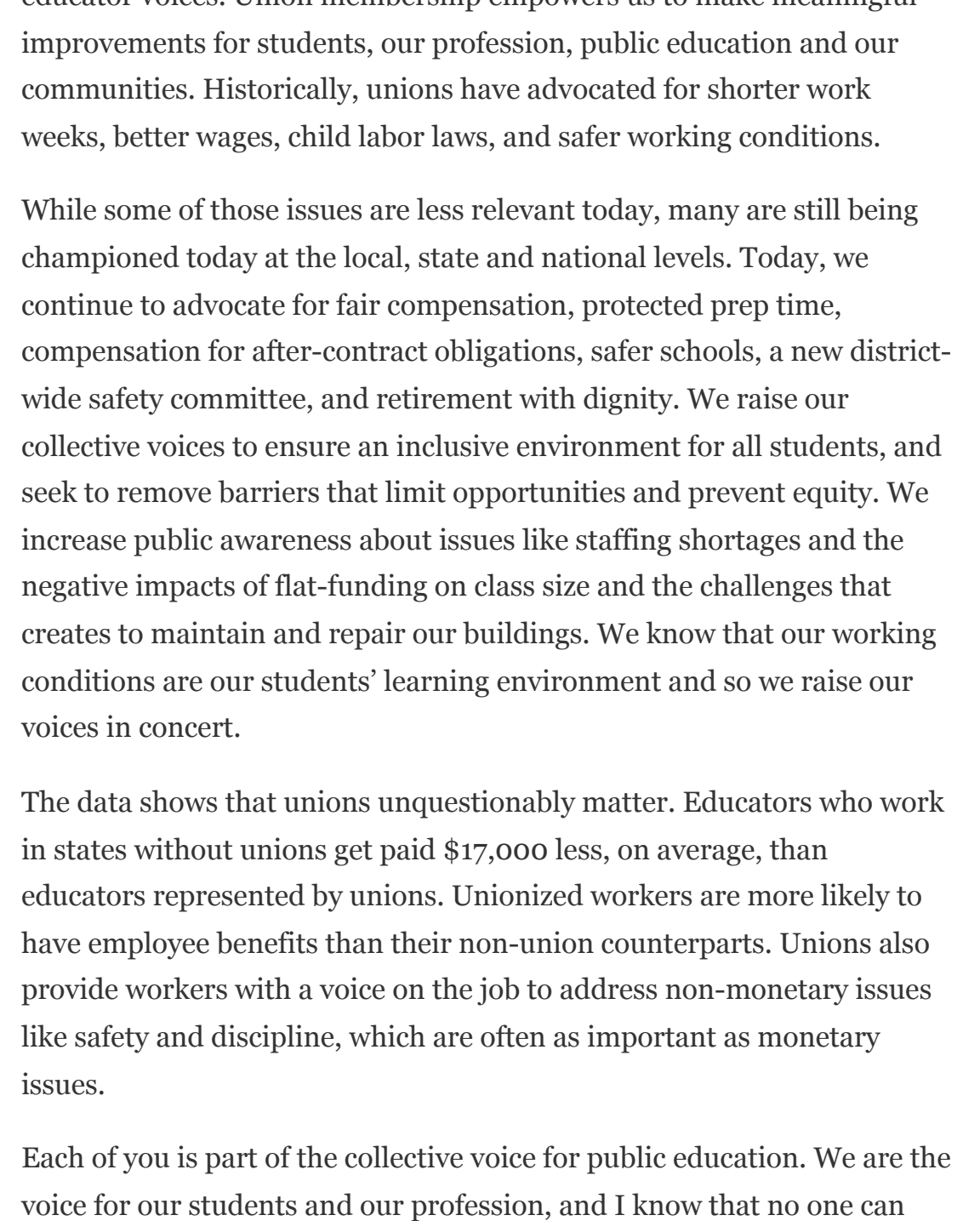
By Danette L. Peterson • Sep 12, 2023
Smart Brevity® count: 6.5 mins...1743 words

Volume 42, Number 3

Included in this edition:

- President's Message - Labor Day and Why Unions Matter
- Why Your Contract Matters: New Contract To-do's
- Healthcare Information
- Local Elections - October 3rd
- Retention and Recruitment Crisis - Pension Townhall Coming to Fairbanks September 26th
- Delegate Assembly Elections

President's Message - Why Unions Matter



At the start of the Labor Day Parade, I was asked about the significance of unions and the importance of the holiday. As a history teacher and product of a union-strong house growing up, I was delighted to respond and to share my thoughts with you.

My father was a 30 year+ union plumber in the Chicago area where I grew up. As kids, he would drive past a hospital or school being built and proudly point to it and tell my sister and me that he was helping to build it. We understood he was helping to make our community better.

I grew up hearing my parents talk about the union but didn't know what it was until I was about twelve years old. I will never forget the day that my dad came home injured as a result of a workplace accident. His glove got caught in a pipe threading machine that didn't have a safety button. The tendons and muscles in his arm were mangled. The union was there for our family every step of the way and made sure that my dad had a job when he was ready to return to work. As a kid, that's when I learned what a union was. It was family. My definition today is more complex, but it still boils down to family and being there for one another and for a larger cause.

We as educators are powerful when we use our collective voice — our educator voices. Union membership empowers us to make meaningful improvements for students, our profession, public education and our communities. Historically, unions have advocated for shorter work weeks, better wages, child labor laws, and safer working conditions.

While some of those issues are less relevant today, many are still being championed today at the local, state and national levels. Today, we continue to advocate for fair compensation, protected prep time, compensation for after-contract obligations, safer schools, a new district-wide safety committee, and retirement with dignity. We raise our collective voices to ensure an inclusive environment for all students, and seek to remove barriers that limit opportunities and prevent equity. We increase public awareness about issues like staffing shortages and the negative impacts of flat-funding on class size and the challenges that creates to maintain and repair our buildings. We know that our working conditions are our students' learning environment and so we raise our voices in concert.

The data shows that unions unquestionably matter. Educators who work in states without unions get paid \$17,000 less, on average, than educators represented by unions. Unionized workers are more likely to have employee benefits than their non-union counterparts. Unions also provide workers with a voice on the job to address non-monetary issues like safety and discipline, which are often as important as monetary issues.

Each of you is part of the collective voice for public education. We are the voice for our students and our profession, and I know that no one can advocate better for public education than public educators. We are the ones with stories, not just data, to share.

We have a contract and now we look ahead. Moving forward, we will advocate for increased local funding, a permanent increase to the base student allocation, and retirement with dignity. United, we will accomplish so much more than we can in isolation. You matter to our organization and I thank you for being a part of FEA.

Congratulations to ESSA

On Saturday, September 9th, ESSA voting members strongly supported their Tentative Agreement. The School Board will take it up for ratification at the September 19th School Board meeting.

Why Your Contract Matters: New Contract To-Dos

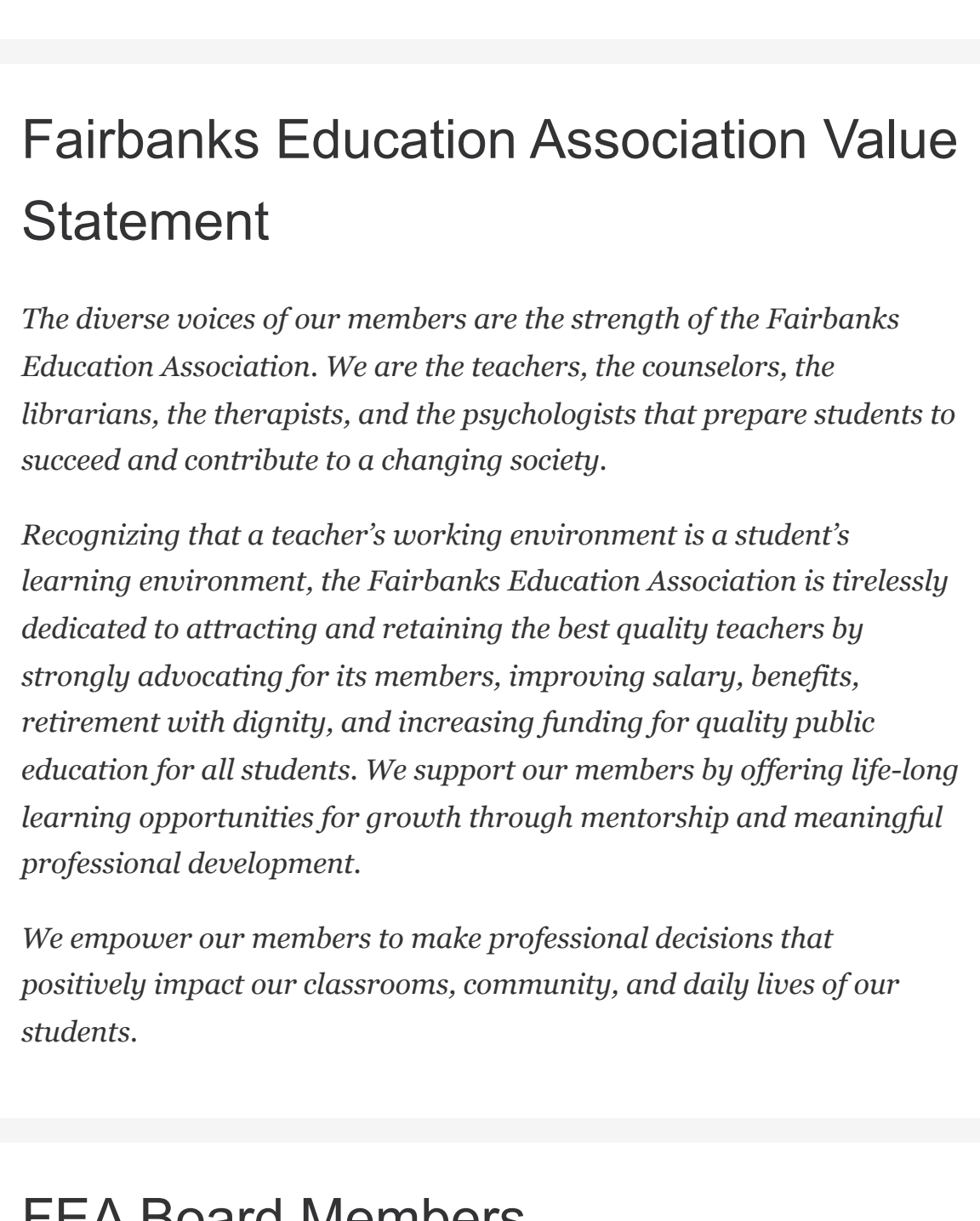
On Tuesday, September 5th, the School Board unanimously approved the Tentative Agreement that FEA had entered into with the District. With the approval of FEA voting members and the School Board, we now have a three-year negotiated agreement that covers July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026. FEA and the District will now proofread and reformat the negotiated agreement to get it ready to be printed. Here's what you should do.

- SAS Contracts: If you already signed a fall SAS contract, ask your administrator to initial the revised "x" factor to reflect \$20.00 and to provide you with a copy;
- Verify that your September 29th check reflects your one-time, non-recurring payment of \$1,500.00 which is paid to any teacher who was employed in the bargaining unit during FY23 and continuously employed as a teacher with the district. Please contact Mechelle Nash (mechelle.nash@k12northstar.org) if you don't see this payment and believe that you are eligible to receive it
- Subbing: Look at your paycheck if you are subbing as you should now be paid per diem;
- Schedule Movement: Please complete the [Request for Salary Change form](#) and submit [official transcripts](#) to request movement on the salary schedule based upon credits or degrees earned prior to the first day of the semester. If you need official transcripts, please request those immediately in order to receive movement on the salary schedule for the entire year.

If you previously earned a double bachelors simultaneously, double masters simultaneously, and/or doctoral degree, additional information about the process will be available later this week;

- Comp Forms: [Complete compensatory time request forms](#) in a timely manner if you are staying beyond your contract day for an IEP, 504 or other required meeting (not applicable to PLC or staff meetings);
- Itinerant Educator Parking: If you are an itinerant educator who travels between buildings, please ask your building administrators for a designated parking spot if this would help you with your job;
- Print: Print a copy of your contract once the proofreading and formatting is complete. An email will be sent to notify you that this has been completed.

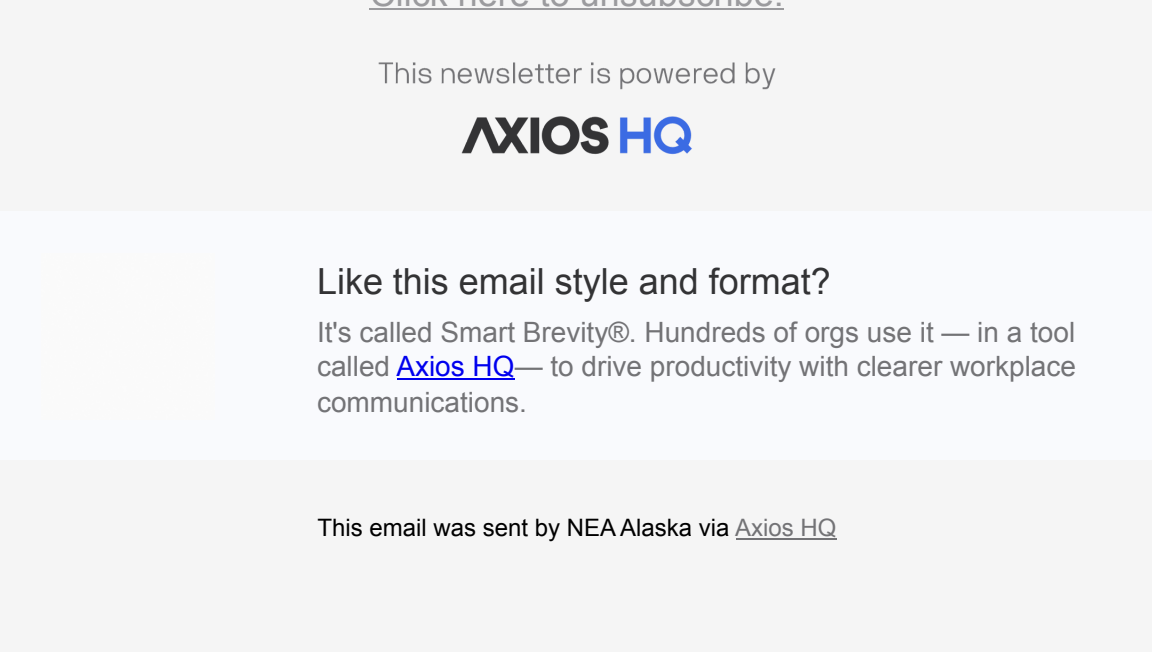
Healthcare Information



NEA-Alaska UniServ Director Mike Wenstrup discusses healthcare plans at Lathrop on September 1, 2023

On September 1st and 9th, FEA worked with the District to hold in-person meetings to provide information and answer questions regarding healthcare coverage. Thank you to Michael Wenstrup, NEA-AK UniServ Director, Robin Carlson, FNSBSD benefit assistant, and Colleen Savoie, healthcare consultant, for their assistance. These important information sessions empower you to make informed decisions about healthcare for yourself and your family. If you missed the first two sessions, look for future healthcare meetings coming your way.

Local Elections - October 3rd



OUR TOWN. YOUR VOTE.

Use your educator voice. Vote for strong public schools.

The local election for School Board candidates and Borough Assembly candidates is on October 3rd. Your vote in local and state elections allows us to collectively support candidates that support public schools and the funding that is needed to provide the schools that our community deserves.

On August 22nd, FEA general membership voted to recommend the following candidates:

FEA & ESSA ENDORSE FOR SCHOOL BOARD BOBBY BURGESS TIM DORAN MEREDITH MAPLE	USE YOUR EDUCATOR VOICE. VOTE. ON OCTOBER 3, 2023 VOTE ABSENTEE • By mail: Application due to the Borough Clerk's Office by September 26 • Electronically: Application due to the Borough Clerk's Office by 12pm October 2 VOTE EARLY Shopper's Forum Mall 1255 Airport Way • September 18 - 28 9am - 6pm • September 24 10am - 6pm VOTE IN PERSON ABSENTEE City of Fairbanks Clerk's Office 800 Cushman St • September 18 - Oct 2 8am - 5pm M-F City of North Pole Clerk's Office 125 Snowman Ln • September 18 - Oct 2 8am - 5pm M-F Shopper's Forum Mall 1255 Airport Way • September 29 & Oct 2 9am - 6pm VOTE AT YOUR POLLING PLACE ON POLLING DAY Find your polling place FNSB.gov/Elections
---	---

FOR BOROUGH ASSEMBLY

SCOTT CRASS

NICK LAJINESS

LIZ REEVES-RAMOS

Retention and Recruitment Crisis

Bring the Future Back North: The pros, cons and costs of returning to a defined benefit retirement system for Alaska's public employees

NEA-Alaska has been working with the Alaska Public Pension Coalition (AKPPC) to inform the Alaska public and legislators about the retention and recruitment crisis facing Alaska educators and public employees. There are town halls coming up at the end of the month to inform members and the public about this issue and proposed policy solutions.

Fairbanks Townhall: Tuesday, September 26th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Fairbanks Pipeline Training Center. Please save the date and stay tuned for a registration link.

Statewide Virtual Townhall: Thursday, September 28th from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. This event is hosted by Alaska Common Ground, an organization committed to engaging Alaskans in respectful conversations. [Register here.](#)

Delegate Assembly Elections

Once a year, elected delegates from across the state have the opportunity to gather at Delegate Assembly — NEA-Alaska's annual meeting to set the direction for the organization by way of resolutions, new business items, legislative priorities, and approving the organization's budget for the following year. This year NEA-Alaska Delegate Assembly will open on the evening of Thursday, January 11, 2023, and it will adjourn late Saturday night, January 13, 2023.

FEA is eligible to send 27 elected delegates. If you are interested in attending and serving as a delegate, please submit your name and a biographical statement of 50 words or less to FEA Vice President Patrick Frymark (patrick.frymark@k12northstar.org).

Your biographical statement must be received by Tuesday, September 26th in order for your name to be listed on the Delegate Assembly ballot.

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

2023

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- **FEA Representative Council Meeting**
Tuesday, September 12th at 5pm at FEA Office
- **FEA Board of Directors Meeting**
Tuesday, September 26th at 5pm at FEA Office
- **Last Day to Submit Your Name for Delegate Assembly**
Tuesday, September 26th

FEAdback Classifieds Ads

All ads are run for two FEAdbacks, unless notified to remove. To view previously posted ads, visit our website: fairbankseducators.org and check the previous electronic editions.

Classified ads are included on a "space available" basis. **IMPORTANT included classified ad in your subject line.**

Fairbanks Education Association Value Statement

The diverse voices of our members are the strength of the Fairbanks Education Association. We are the teachers, the counselors, the librarians, the therapists, and the psychologists that prepare students to succeed and contribute to a changing society.

Recognizing that a teacher's working environment is a student's learning environment, the Fairbanks Education Association is tirelessly dedicated to attracting and retaining the best quality teachers by strongly advocating for its members, improving salary, benefits, retirement with dignity, and increasing funding for quality public education for all students. We support our members by offering life-long learning opportunities for growth through mentorship and meaningful professional development.

We empower our members to make professional decisions that positively impact our classrooms, community, and daily lives of our students.

FEA Board Members

- FEA Officers:*
- President - Danette Peterson
 - Vice President - Patrick Frymark
 - Recording Secretary - Paula Addis
 - Treasurer - Melodee Sonnenberg
 - Retired Past President: Sandi Ryan
- NEA-Alaska Directors: Coby Haas, Kristen Dullen, Jessica Iglesias
- FEA Board of Directors by Region:*
- East Region: Robyn Capp, Wendy Demers, Kelly Scanlon
 - West Region: Natasha Carlson, Dave Devaughn
 - NEST Region: Sarah Dimmick, Shelby Hooper, Mariiko Kinikin, Ed Passon
 - Ft. Wainwright: Pepper McFarland, Julie Lougee
- Advisory:*
- Retired Member Representative: Leslie Conner
- NEA-Alaska UniServ Directors: Michael Wenstrup and Grier Hopkins

In solidarity,
Danette L. Peterson
President
Fairbanks Education Association

Feedback

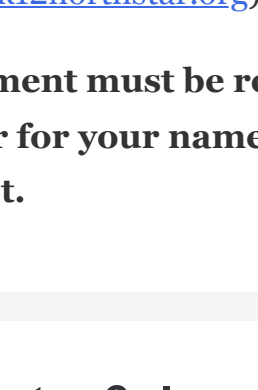
Anonymously tell us what you thought of this newsletter. Your responses will help us create better content for you!

Was this edition useful?



[Click here to unsubscribe.](#)

This newsletter is powered by



Like this email style and format?
It's called Smart Brevity®. Hundreds of orgs use it — in a tool called [AXIOSHQ](#) — to drive productivity with clearer workplace communications.

This email was sent by NEA-Alaska via [AxiosHQ](#)