



FACT SHEET

Collective Bargaining:

A Win for Students, for Educators, and for Virginia

FACT: Through the collective bargaining process, teachers bring their professional experience and ideas to the table—and that will enhance opportunities for students.

In other states with collective bargaining, educators and school districts have negotiated agreements that lowered class sizes, provided for extra resources for students, and addressed school health and safety issues, among other benefits.

Before the Virginia Supreme Court put an end to locally bargained contracts in 1977, VEA local Unions had bargained provisions on such issues as adding art, music, and reading teachers, school discipline policies, setting of the school calendar, and many others.

Negotiations ensure that the perspective of teachers, who see students every day, will be recognized—and that's good for public schools.

FACT: Locally bargained contracts help ensure that Virginia attracts and retains the best educators to our classrooms.

Frequent staff turnover hurts students, and low pay and benefits are one reason that teachers leave their jobs.

Virginia has hundreds of unfilled teaching positions, and many other positions are filled by individuals without full certification. Virginia ranks 32nd in the nation in teacher pay, while enrollments in teacher preparation programs are declining.

Collective bargaining can help ensure teachers are paid a professional wage with adequate benefits, and that will increase the supply of excellent teachers.

FACT: Collective bargaining ensures that teachers have a genuine voice in their school division.

Poor working conditions are a barrier to teachers' success with students and leave them drained and discouraged. Teacher working conditions ARE student learning conditions. Through collective bargaining, teachers have a genuine voice in decisions that matter for students and for school personnel.

Bargaining provides a means for identifying—and solving—problems and challenges for the betterment of student learning.