

FCFT RETIREE NEWSLETTER

Greetings,

Happy holidays! With Thanksgiving being so close, I would like to say how thankful I am to all our retirees for their service in Fairfax County Public Schools. Your work and dedication helped make FCPS the world-class school system that we are working so hard to maintain today. As you know, FCFT is currently working towards winning collective bargaining. Collective bargaining, banned in Virginia for school employees from January 14, 1977 until May 1, 2021, will give workers a voice that we have never had before. While the district provides many options for meeting and conferring, including through its various advisory committees, the district has always had the final say over matters affecting employee pay, working conditions, and benefits... until now.

Once we have collective bargaining, employees will have the power to negotiate fair working conditions, competitive pay, and reasonable benefits packages. Without collective bargaining, the district was able to make changes to employee insurance benefits under the cover of non-disclosure agreements and without voting power of employees. Under collective bargaining, future insurance changes can only happen with employee agreement.

To make collective bargaining happen, we need your help! As retired members of FCFT, you have the freedom to speak out that active members, afraid of reprisal and retribution, often do not have. Some ways that you can help:

Call and email members of the school board. In particular, for Fairfax residents, reach out to your school board representative and the three at-large members of the board: Rachna Sizemore Heizer, Karen Keys-Gamarra, and Abrar Omeish.

Come out to rallies. We co-hosted a rally at the school board on Thursday, November 3. You can come lead chants, hold signs, or stand in solidarity.

Talk to any current staff you know. Let them know how much collective bargaining will benefit them. If they aren't members of FCFT, encourage them to join!

Look for emails from Patty Barbour with opportunities to phone or text bank. Sign up to speak at school board meetings. This will be especially helpful once the school board presents their resolution.

Let me or Patty know if you would be able to assist in planning future rallies. Let me or Patty know if you would be able to visit schools during lunch time to meet with staff members.

Thank you again for all the work you have done to make Fairfax County Public Schools a world-class district for our students!

In solidarity,

David Walrod



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MEET THE NEW SUPERINTENDENT, DR. MICHELLE REID

Dr. Reid is hosting Community Conversations across the division this fall as a means of getting to know our communities and to share her vision for our division. After the Community Conversations, Dr. Reid will share the take-aways in January 2023 in a State of the Schools presentation. The community conversations will be held from 6:30—7:30 p.m. Interpretation services, child care, and light refreshments will be provided. Administrators of the high school pyramid schools will also be present for these conversations.

Dates remaining are as follows:

Lewis High School	11/10/22
Justice High School	11/21/22
Annandale High School	11/29/22

Fall Message from President, FCFT-R



Dear Retiree,

The leaves are changing color and fall is definitely in the air. The time for changing of the seasons and time have arrived!

Remember open enrollment (OE) for 2023 benefits will start on November 1 and end on November 18, 2022. Elections made during OE will become effective January 1, 2023.

Retirees currently enrolled in FCPS benefits will be receiving their FCPS Open Enrollment Statement in the mail to their home addresses on file. This statement includes information about you and your covered dependent(s) projected enrollment for 2023 and is based on your coverage elections as of October 2022.

Retirees currently enrolled in FCPS benefits will receive their annual Briefing through the mail. You can also access the electronic versions on the [Retiree Benefits Publications website](#). This newsletter contains details about changes or updates occurring to your FCPS benefits as well as how to access additional resources and materials during Open Enrollment. There are two versions this year - a [Medicare-eligible Retiree Briefing](#) and a [Non-Medicare-eligible Retiree Briefing](#). Please be sure to read the Retiree Briefing that best applies to you.

After an extensive request for proposal process (RFP) that was conducted over the last several months, a contract was awarded to Cigna. Cigna will replace Aetna and CareFirst beginning in January 2023 for non-Medicare-eligible retirees and dependents.

The new plan is similar to current plans for most benefits, and **97% of existing primary care providers and specialists will remain in-network**. This means that the vast majority of retirees will experience no disruption in the providers they currently access. [Learn more about the new Cigna plan including the Provider Search tool](#).

Premium rates for 2023. View the [2023 Retiree Premium Rate Chart](#).

This information was taken directly from the FCPS website regarding open enrollment. We encourage you to go to the website, <https://www.fcps.edu/benefits-open-enrollment-for-retirees>.



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- November 21, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- December 12, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- December, TBD All Member Meeting Hybrid
(link will be sent to members via email)
- January 23, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- February 27, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- March 20, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- April 17, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- May 15, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
- June 26, 2022 Executive Board Meeting

Many retirees from FCPS have moved away from Fairfax. When we send out a mailing to our FCFT retired members, a few come back with no forwarding address. Please let us know your current address. E-mail me at pbarbour@fcft.org or Katie at kmlimarcik@fcft.org.

FUTURE EVENTS PLANNED:

VIRTUAL BOOK TALKS

JOINT RETIREE OUTING WITH FEA, TBD

MEMBERSHIP MEETING DECEMBER 2022

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

"The most important of-
fice, and the one which all
of us can and should fill, is
that of private citizen."

Louis Brandeis

*"Volunteers do not neces-
sarily have the time; they
just have the heart."*

Elizabeth Andrew

*"You can study govern-
ment and politics in
school, but the best way to
really understand the
process is to volunteer
your time."*

Rob McKenna

*"The ballot is stronger
than the bullet."*
Abraham Lincoln

*"My vote is my voice...and
the voice of all who strug-
gled, so that I may have
my voice."*

Lydia Obasi

*"I speak not for myself but
for those without voice."*

Malala Mousafzai

Would you like to advocate for older adults who may not feel they have a "voice," or help them feel more connected to others? Do you want to empower and mentor children? Would you like to help enrich senior centers' programming with your skills? Check out the array of volunteer opportunities below.

Volunteer Advocates

As a mandated program under the Older Americans Act, the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (NVLTCOP) is often called on to assist residents and consumers to advocate for their rights to ensure quality of care and quality of life. Empathetic volunteers are needed to advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care facilities and help them with concerns they are unable to resolve alone. If you have skills in listening, communicating, and problem-solving, consider becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman.

Volunteers must complete an initial three-day training, commit to a minimum of one year of service, and at least four hours per week assisting residents at assigned facilities close to home or work. There are also ongoing, required training opportunities during their tenure with the NVLTCOP. For more information about volunteering, or other nursing or assisted living concerns, call the NVLTCOP at **703-324-5861**, TTY **711**, or contact Camden Doran at Camden.Doran@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Volunteer Solutions

Volunteer Solutions (under Fairfax County's Dept. of Family Services) provides volunteer opportunities to help older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers. There are many ways to help throughout Fairfax County, either one-on-one, or in group settings at senior centers. Create meaningful connections and reduce social isolation. The following roles are needed (and more): Drivers for grocery shopping, medical appointments, and errands, social visitors, and skilled volunteers at senior centers. To learn more go to bit.ly/FXVSVOL, email VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov or call 703-324-5406. Volunteers are especially needed in the Alexandria region.

Befriend-A-Child Program

Department of Family Services needs mentors for children 5 to 12 years old. Males and bilingual English-Spanish speakers are highly encouraged to apply. Mentors must be able to make a two-year commitment, spend at least eight hours per month with their mentee and participate in monthly group outings. Fill your time in a fun, new way, while making a positive impact on a child. Go to bit.ly/DFSBAC. Contact the Befriend-A-Child Program Coordinator at **703-324-7072**, or DFSBefriend-A-Child@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Department of Family Services' Body Safety Program needs volunteer classroom instructors to help empower elementary students with the tools they need to prevent or interrupt child abuse and exploitation. The next training will be in Fairfax on Friday, August 19, 2022. Visit bit.ly/BodySafetyProgram or contact Francesca Watson at Francesca.Watson2@FairfaxCounty.gov, or call **703-324-7459**.

REMEMBER TO VOTE

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

The 2022 midterms are our chance to make our choice and our voice heard. The choices we make in these elections are especially consequential. In an article from our national headquarters entitled “Which Side Are You On?” it states, “We hear a lot about the divisions polarizing our country, but Americans are united by a powerful bond: We all want a better life for ourselves and our families. That will come from growing the economy and creating good jobs; protecting the right to join a union; and ensuring people have great public schools, affordable healthcare and a voice in our democracy. Voting is key to achieving all that. Vote—and get others to vote .”

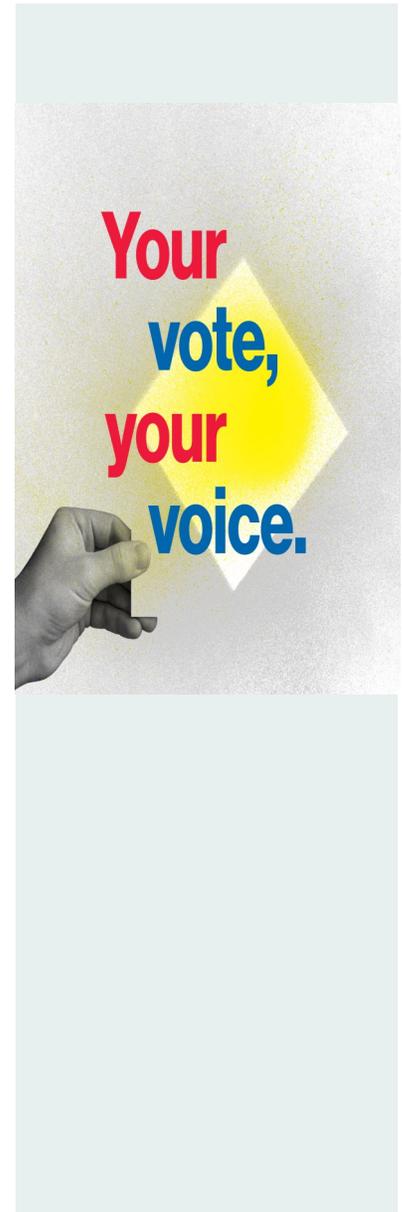
“Voting is the expression of our commitment to ourselves, one another, this country, and this world.”

Sharon Salzberg

DID YOU KNOW?

Virginia ranks among top states for retirement? Is it due to the climate, the wonderful four seasons and beautiful scenery, friendly population or that we are really for lovers? Whatever the reason , it was reported that about 86% of VRS retirees remain in the commonwealth. According to a report by

WalletHub, Virginia ranks as one of the best states in the nation for retirees to live. The study placed Virginia as number four overall out of all 50 states.



OUR ORGANIZATION

FAIRFAX COUNTY FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

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FCFT EXECUTIVE BOARD

David Walrod	President
Lyndsie Galizio	1st Vice President
Emily VanDerhoff	Treasurer
Patty S. Barbour	Vice President, Retirees
Nonye Oladimeji	Vice President, Audit Chair
Amina Jamai	Vice President
Missy Griego	Vice President
Lamonica Brevard	Vice President

FCFT STAFF

OUR ORGANIZATION

Fairfax Co. Federation of Teachers represents all non-administrative certified and classified Fairfax County public school employees. we are the teachers, counselors, librarians, teaching assistants, clerical employees, and other staff who work so hard to make our schools work.

Kathryn (Punky) Orlando	Office Manager
Katie Mlinarcik	Executive Assistant
John McLaren	Director, Member Relations Representatives
Vacant	Member Relations Representative
Patty S. Barbour	Retiree Relations Representative
Eamon Clifford Hayden Gise Camden Layton Anya McMurrer	FCFT Organizers