Dear Bigfork School District Voters,

We appreciate the Bigfork School District Board’s effort to support our local education.  As a quick reminder, bonds are for buildings and levies are for learning. Local dollars support our local students where the state funding falls short. This decrease in school funding has resulted in cuts to our programs and ultimately our student’s futures.

Major attention has been centered on national events, but the results of this levy have an effect closer to home. While Covid-19 has disrupted our lives, the school district employees have worked very hard to provide a bit of normalcy during this pandemic.  Our support and commitment to our students and community has come in many different forms from instruction, encouragement, guidance and resources. As it is not our choice to have to be in these circumstances, our passion for education drives us forward in helping to prepare our students for their future.

In delivering quality education that we are accustomed to, Bigfork needs to continue to attract and more importantly, retain quality teachers. Our district has not been immune to the teacher shortage seen throughout the country.  In some curriculum areas we have had very few and in a few instances, zero applicants for job postings.  We have also had applicants withdraw at the last minute, when a higher paying district in the valley offers them a position. School closures at the collegiate level will also contribute to a decrease in teacher numbers since the students do not have the opportunity to complete student teaching. Education continuity and a focus on student learning happens when qualified teachers are retained and not lost to other districts or from leaving the profession. Having a competitive salary matrix during teacher shortages helps to attract and retain qualified candidates.

Please consider your impact to our student’s education as you make your decision when voting for the levy or levies.  We humbly ask for your support to our life’s work in bringing a quality education to each student in the Bigfork School District.

Sincerely,

Bigfork Teachers Union