

Announcement of opening for the position of

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**AEA**

**ARIZONA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

**OPPORTUNITY**

AEA is searching for a visionary and energetic leader to assume the role of Executive Director. The ideal candidate will exemplify core values of integrity, honesty, and transparency, and will be adept at fostering strong relationships both internally and externally. In collaboration with the Association's governance and staff, the Executive Director will provide operational leadership and champion our mission: "Keeping the Promise of Quality Public Education." We are looking for a candidate with exceptional vision, integrity, adaptability, and experience to drive this mission forward in Arizona – a state with one of the largest metro areas in the country as well as many small, often conservative leaning rural members and leaders – all of whom support the mission of AEA.

The successful candidate will demonstrate high emotional intelligence, sound judgment, and creativity, along with a proven track record in strategic leadership and a demonstrated commitment to field organizing as a means of building power. This includes setting and achieving objectives, prioritizing initiatives, and advancing the long-term interests of the organization.

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

Established in 1892, before Arizona was a state, the Arizona Education Association was founded by teachers due to a dispute regarding textbooks. Currently, the Arizona Education Association is made up of more than 22,000 educators across Arizona. We are teachers, bus drivers, librarians, school counselors, cafeteria workers, school nurses, and more. We have more than 100 local affiliates in almost every school district in the state and are the state's second-largest labor union. We are part of the National Education Association, which is 3 million members strong – the largest labor union in the world. Unlike other organizations involved in public education, which may set their priorities based on the preferences of donors or small groups of activists, our union makes decisions democratically. Our legislative priorities are set by our members at our annual 600-person Delegate Assembly, with decisions made by an elected board of directors during the rest of the year.

**POSITION OVERVIEW**

The Executive Director is the Association's chief administrative officer and chief operating officer who leads the management team and staff in coordination with the AEA President to ensure implementation of policies, procedures, and programs approved and adopted by the AEA Board of Directors. In collaboration with the President and Officers, the Executive Director develops and manages an annual organizational budget and is accountable to the Board for the long term financial and fiscal health and sustainability of the Association.

**ORGANIZATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**Work in partnership with elected officers and Board to provide visionary leadership that is committed to a high participation union as a means of members to growing power.**

AEA will require continued focus on internal capacity-building to grow and strengthen the membership by demonstrating the power and value of union membership and participation. AEA has an opportunity to cultivate a new generation of education leaders and increase organizational impact, building on several years of effective engagement of new members and early career professionals.

**Experience collaborating with a union workforce in order to achieve organizational goals.** The Executive Director must have knowledge of applicable federal and state laws and the administrative rules that regulate labor organizations. The experience must include managing in a union environment and collective bargaining negotiations.

**Leadership that supports diversity and professional growth.** The Executive Director must establish strong, trusting, mutually supportive relationships with all stakeholder groups in a complex environment with multiple priorities, and should be an effective communicator.

**Proven Leadership in Team Development, and Coalition Building.** The Executive Director must have a record of fostering teamwork and consensus, effectively managing conflict, creative problem-solving, and appropriate risk-taking. The experience should be inclusive of diverse individual and cultural perspectives and demonstrate an ability to inspire trust and communicate sound reasoning in an authentic and persuasive manner. AEA requires a leader who is able to develop networks, leverage diversity and build internal and external alliances to support strategic relationships and achieve organizational goals.

**A champion for public education.** The position requires a belief in and a strong advocacy for educators owning and directing their profession, and a commitment to promoting diversity, equal opportunity and social justice.

**Encourage political action and strengthen external relationships to influence pro-public education policies that align with AEA's mission, vision and core values.** The Executive Director must directly and indirectly maintain effective relationships and partnerships with other educational, labor and business organizations, and with the governor, state legislature, and other government officials and their staffs.

**Respect and respond to the demands of a member-directed and democratic environment.** While working under the direction of the Board, the Executive Director exercises sound judgment and accepts the responsibility to act decisively when appropriate and engage staff in moving the organization forward in ways that play to the strengths of the diverse landscape of local affiliates around the state.

## **ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES, EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION:**

### **Member Focus**

A leader who values public education and is focused on member needs. Someone who believes in member engagement, trust, and loyalty, and who is committed to fostering strong relationships between AEA and its members. An experienced leader who has successfully demonstrated the ability to implement high quality programs and services that bring value to members. Demonstrated experience using data to identify additional ways to offer value to members' professional practice and careers. An influential leader who understands membership and is able to expand market share, has effectively led innovative strategies, programs, initiatives, and policies designed to attract and increase new membership. Proven ability to create collaborative relationships and partnerships with local, county and state governments, as well as community groups and organizations.

## **Strategic Planning and Execution**

Documented experience in leading organization-wide efforts in planning, implementation, process improvements, innovation, financial management, and building high-performance work teams. A record of executive leadership in strategic planning that required significant organizational change, including experience utilizing reliable methods to ensure accountability and timeliness in the execution of strategic goals and objectives. An individual who possesses the ability to juggle multiple projects with clear priorities and articulate the connections between the big picture and specific action plans and timetables.

## **Leadership**

A public education advocate who understands the central role educators play in leading change in their profession. Proven record of organizational leadership marked by a passion for education. A visionary leader who has confidently engaged others to identify and work toward common goals. Capable and willing to voice respectful and effective dissent when and where appropriate.

Evidence of success in achieving desired outcomes when leading organizational innovation and change. A nimble leader who is capable of learning while leading. Exercise political savvy and flexibility in adapting to changing political/organizational realities.

A demonstrated ability to manage effectively in a unionized environment. An organizer with a solid grasp of the appropriate role that staff play in building member power. Has a demonstrated, successful record of attracting and motivating highly talented staff and is highly skilled at coaching and mentoring others. Proven success in building and/or maintaining coalition partners.

## **Motivation & Courage**

Demonstrate exceptional motivation and courage in their leadership approach. They will be driven to inspire and energize teams, embracing challenges with resilience and determination. This leader will possess the bravery to make bold decisions, take calculated risks, and confront difficult issues head-on, all while maintaining a steadfast commitment to the organization's mission. Their ability to motivate others and face adversity with confidence will be crucial in achieving our strategic goals and fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and perseverance.

## **Desired Experience**

A minimum of 3-5 years of middle or senior management experience in positions of increasing responsibility in education, labor/union advocacy, public policy, nonprofit leadership, or other related fields.

- Experience in public education advocacy, belief in the central role of unions, and unwavering support for organized public education.
- Demonstrated experience with and commitment to field organizing as the primary means of building union power.

- Must be a lifelong learner who supports structures for staff ongoing professional development.

## **EDUCATION**

Bachelor's degree required; master's degree preferred or equivalent work experience.

## **COMPENSATION PACKAGE**

AEA provides a competitive salary and a full range of benefits, including a defined benefit plan.

## **TO APPLY**

To be considered for this position, please provide the following:

- A current resume reflecting your qualifications for this position.
- A Letter of Application that specifically addresses how your career accomplishments have prepared you to meet the challenges and opportunities presented in this position.

All materials must be sent electronically to **NEA-Arizona Search Consultant: [Unionsearch.org](http://Unionsearch.org)**

**Patricia Johnson, Managing Partner: [patjohnson@unionsearch.org](mailto:patjohnson@unionsearch.org)**

For confidential inquiries, questions, **salary information**, or to schedule a call, please email Patricia Johnson.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: October 10, 2024**

ARIZONA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER AND DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE BASED ON RACE, CREED, RELIGION, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENETIC INFORMATION, MARITAL STATUS, or DISABILITY.