



The VOICE

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Upcoming Events

May 10: Degrees Not Debt
Presentation

May 17: FYRE Quarter
Auction

May 24: Early Release

May 27: Deadline to appeal
IPS score on evaluation

May 29: Memorial Day—
Holiday for All



Retention is the Key to Success

In May of 2015, an article appeared on the front page of the VOICE entitled, "Disappointment and Retention." It was an apt and catchy title. Unfortunately, despite efforts of the district to make some strides in recruiting teachers, the *retention* part of the equation is still lacking.

Between now and May 17th, teachers will be receiving their final ratings for their instructional practice scores. Unfortunately, too many annual teachers will also be receiving the "thanks for your service to St. Lucie County" letter.

Fired. No reason given.

"You're just not the right fit."

It goes without saying that we hope principals think twice about releasing teachers who may not be perfect in their first year or two of teaching. No one is, or could be, the way things change and with the demands made on all teachers these days.

Teachers on an annual contract should not have to wait anxiously every year to know if they have pleased or displeased their principals and will be rewarded with another year of the most difficult job around.

If a teacher has done a good job—enough to be rated effective or highly effective—he/she should know without any hesitation that St. Lucie District Schools want them to stay around.

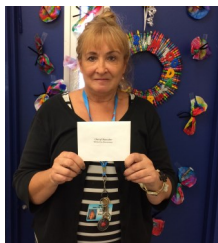
Even the Florida legislature just decided that removing the ability of school districts to offer this semblance of job security through negotiated agreements to new teachers wasn't a sound idea. Principals with an ax to grind should put on their big girl and boy pants and think of the larger mission of this district which means that a qualified, dedicated teacher needs to be in EVERY classroom. Granted we are down from a past of 75-100 unfilled positions, but even 40 is still too many. Data is clearly showing that in schools that have large turnover, the students are NOT making gains fast enough and the efforts of every coach, program, or strategy in the district can't make that change without a teacher in the room.

We MUST keep teachers who may not be perfect but have potential to be great. Real leaders work to get them there.

Read the *Voice* to Win!!!

Read, *answer the riddles* and SEND your answer to Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org by **May 23, 2017**

1. **By how much did the legislature raise the student allotment?**
2. **By what date must all evaluations be completed?**

Winners of \$10 Gift Card

Cheryl Buescher
White City Elementary



April Sherwood
Treasure Coast High

Answers to April Voice Riddles:

1. How many formal and informal observations does a Category 1.1 teacher need?
A: 2 formal and 4 informal
2. How many years must non-instructional staff work for the district in order to receive the \$1,000 bonus?
A: 25 years

Focus On CU with CU VP Sandy Rohn

Welcome to May...for those of us that work 10 months, that's about 23 days to go by the time you read this. With the new year coming up, if you want to make changes in jobs or site locations, now is the time to start looking and letting your supervisor know you are looking for a change.

One thing that will never change is your Union's commitment to you, protecting your rights and helping you to grow. Statewide your state Union, FEA, is working on increased professional development and to help advance all support staff to whatever job you desire. This has always been a priority with our local Union. Please know we are here for you and we hope you are there for each other.

With what is happening right this minute in our country and state to dismantle and starve public education, it is more vital than ever to stand up for what is right, make calls to legislators when needed and make your voices heard. This

is your job, your students and your community. Please send those emails and make those calls when we reach out to you. **Your voice matters and we have to work together to save our schools.**

With summer coming, please make sure we have an updated phone and email address for you so we can reach you if needed.

Each year at this time it is a good idea to remind you about how "Comp" time works. You can either use the time you have by the end of the year, or can choose to be paid for those hours. Just let the school secretary know so they can process the paperwork. If they tell that you can't be paid out, contact the office and we will straighten that out for you.

Have a wonderful summer and look out for emails for further contract negotiations.

Remember . . . we are stronger together. Sandy

FYRE Rocks for Books and the Community

SLCTA/CU's FYRE chapter is rocking the community involvement this month by jumping into the "St. Lucie Rocks" movement and painting several dozen rocks, hiding them in the community and letting the finders exchange their rock for a brand new children's book.

Rocks have been hidden through Port St. Lucie and Ft. Pierce and have a sticker on the back that identifies them as SLCTA/CU FYRE rocks and where to redeem them.

If you are not familiar with the "St. Lucie Rocks" movement it's a Facebook group that encourages kids and adults to get outside and explore and find the amazing painted/decorated rocks that have been hidden in parks, along trails, and even in some participating stores.

CTA/CU Board member and LPA teacher Alan Mathison and his wife Christine Mathison (teacher and Worksite Leader at WMP) participate with their daughter and describe the move-

ment as, "Pokemon Go without the electronics."

Members of the FB page, St. Lucie Rocks, post rocks and clues about where to find them. The lucky finders post when they have been found.

Free rocks for painting are available in your yard, of course, or for smooth, flat rocks businesses like Florida Falls on US 1 in Ft. Pierce will give you a free bag or two. Rocks are then painted, sealed and hid. Good luck!

By the Numbers:

Negotiations Corner

Day in May all evaluations must be completed and shared:

17th

Total new members who joined the union in April:

14

Last day of school in June for all teachers and students:

5th

Number of days you have to write a rebuttal to your evaluation:

10

As we steadily approach the end of the school year, the end of the contract year, and the end of the FL 2017 legislative session one thing is clear: the negotiation process for salary and benefits for 2017-2018 will be difficult. Although not signed or passed as of the writing of this article, the Legislature has only increased the per student allocation by a measly \$25 per student. That means that while there is a small overall budget increase to education, the amount is essentially the same as it was last year (despite some increased operating costs).

Ultimately, our goal is to have a completed contract and compensation benefits package

to present to our members at the start of the school year. But we won't unless the entire package of language and compensation and benefits is worthy of our members.

At the last School Board meeting, the Board was reminded that their budgetary priority needs to be SLPS employees. So despite the state's paltry increases in funding, the Board must prioritize what they do receive to make sure the needs of the people who work in SLPS are met:

- ◆ Real raises.
- ◆ Insurance that is a benefit.
- ◆ Working Conditions that foster a healthy environment.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2017 St. Lucie County CTA/CU Scholarship Winners



Noah Johnson—Lincoln Park Academy

Son of Member Kelly Johnson of C A Moore Elementary School

Zach McGuire - Fort Pierce Central High School

Son of Member Lisa McGuire of F K Sweet Elementary School

Salvatore Spera - Treasure Coast High School

Son of Member Karen Spera of Oak Hammock K—8 School

Darcie Milfort - Fort Pierce Central High School

Daughter of Member Marie Milfort of the Office of Student Assignment

Olivia Wallman - Treasure Coast High School

Daughter of Member Jennifer Wallman of Manatee Elementary School

Alexis Moreira - Fort Pierce Westwood High School

Daughter of Member Mary Moreira of Westgate K—8 School



**St. Lucie Classroom Teachers' Association
and Classified Unit**

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CTA/CU Executive Board

Vicki Rodriguez, President CTA/CU: CTA Office
Christine Hill, Vice President CTA: CTA Office
Sandy Rohn, Vice-President CU: SGA
Laura Lovett, CTA/CU Treasurer: Records Dept.
Rebecca Petrie, Secretary CTA: SRE
Cynthia Poole, CU Secretary : Student Assignment
David Freeland, CTA Executive Board: FPCH
Tammy Davis, CTA Executive Board: FKS
Alan Mathison, CTA, Executive Board: LPA
Aurea Justo, CTA Executive Board: FLN
Pamela Jenkins, Executive Board CU: SLWCH

Union Staff

Maureen Sinnott/ Member Support Specialist

Lucy Bravo/ Organizing and Communications Specialist

Barbara Ziegler/ Office Manager

CTA/CU Recruiter of the Year

Congratulations Sandy Rohn!

Since August, Sandy has recruited 18 new members for
the SLCTA/CU.

As a Thank You, Creative Benefits has awarded her a gift
card for \$100!

Worksite Leaders—Save the Date!

WORKSITE LEADER CONFERENCE

AUGUST 5, 2017

PLACE: TBA

Are you interested in becoming a Worksite Leader?

We want to hear from you! Please contact Lucy.bravo@floridaea.org

Discovering Discounts



Check out the values online at our new website at
unionplus.org/aftbenefits

*15% ON THE MONTHLY SERVICE CHARGE OF QUALIFIED WIRELESS PLANS: Available only to current members of qualified AFL-CIO member unions, other authorized individuals associated with eligible unions and other sponsoring organizations with a qualifying agreement. Must provide acceptable proof of union membership such as a membership card from your local union, a pay stub showing dues deduction or the Union Plus Member Discount Card and subscribe to service under an individual account for which the member is personally liable. Offer contingent upon in-store verification of union member status. Discount subject to agreement between Union Privilege and AT&T and may be interrupted, changed or discontinued without notice. Discount applies only to recurring monthly service charge of qualified voice and data plans, not overages. Not available with unlimited voice or unlimited data plans. For Family Talk, applies only to primary line. For all Mobile Share plans, applies only to monthly plan charge of plans with 1GB or more, not to additional monthly device access charges. Additional restrictions apply. May take up to 2 bill cycles after eligibility confirmed and will not apply to prior charges. Applied after application of any available credit. May not be combined with other service discounts. Visit union-plus.org/aft or contact AT&T at 866-499-8008 for details.

**Certain restrictions, limitations, and qualifications apply to these grants. Additional information and eligibility criteria can be obtained at UnionPlus.org/Assistance. Credit approval required. Terms and conditions apply. The Union Plus Credit Cards are issued by Capital One, N.A., pursuant to a license from Mastercard International Incorporated. Capital One N.A. is not responsible for the contents of this message and/or any of the other third party products/services mentioned. The Mastercard Brand Mark is a registered trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated.

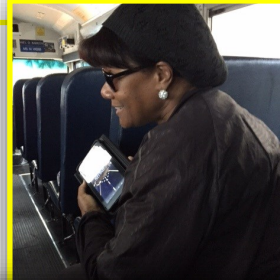


The VOICE St. Lucie Classroom Teachers' Association and Classified Unit
Extra!

May 2, 2017
Extra!



The day began at 5:15 a.m. and ended after 6 p.m. at the North Transportation Compound for Vice-President Chris Hill, along with other Bus Drivers/Attendants. Chris was able to walk in Worksite Leader Mona Webb's shoes and observe the great job and care she and the bus driver Mrs. Barron have for the students on their bus.



SLC FYRE NEWS

Degrees not Debt

1. Public Service Loan Forgiveness
2. Income Driven Repayment Options
3. Increased Use of Grants

May 10, 2017

Dinner @ 5:00 p.m.

Presentation 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

SLC CTA/CU OFFICE – 371 E. Midway Rd. FP

Open to ALL SLC school employees



Dinner sponsored by
NTA Life

The VOICE St. Lucie Classroom Teachers' Association and Classified Unit

Extra!

Extra!

May 2, 2017

Extra!



SLC FYRE'S



Quarter Auction

May 17th @ 6 pm

Come out for a
night of fun!
Buy a paddle,
participate in
drawings and have a
good time, all while
raising money for the
community!

To be held at:

Sons of Italy

765 SW Dalton Circle

Port St. Lucie, FL 34953

For more info, contact Lucy Bravo:

772-464-6430

The **VOICE** St. Lucie Classroom Teachers' Association and Classified Unit
Extra!

May 2, 2017
Extra!



WE ARE ST. LUCIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Join your fellow St. Lucie Public School educators at the City of Port St. Lucie Council Meeting! Council members have said derogatory things about the school system and need to be "schooled". Wear your red shirt and either be an audience member or speak up and tell them how wrong they are about us.

**CITY OF PSL COUNCIL MTG.
MONDAY, MAY 8TH @ 7:00 P.M.**

**Stand up for
YOURSELF and
ALL of us in SLPS**

Wear Red!

**Let's Pack the
House like we've
done before!**

Bring a Friend!

**Can we count on
your support?**

**CITY OF PORT
ST. LUCIE
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

**121 S.W. PORT ST.
LUCIE BLVD. PORT
ST. LUCIE, FL 34984**

*(at the corner of
Airoso & PSL Blvd)*