



The VOICE

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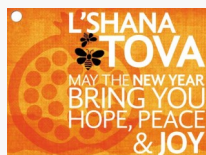
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Upcoming Events

September 6: FYRE Quarter Auction—Sons of Italy

September 7: TIGER PAC meeting 5 p.m. CTA Ofc.

September 21: Fall Holiday for Rosh Hashanah



September 27: Early Release—Record-Keeping

Medical Insurance Premium Increases Smaller Than Expected

Last year when we received a premium decrease from Florida Blue, we were aware that there was a good chance that we would see Florida Blue increase premiums this year. This year, we kept that in mind as we worked to increase pay for all employees and delved into options for affordable insurance with usable benefits.

On August 25th, the Compensation and Benefits negotiating teams were presented with Florida Blue's renewal rates for the plans and looked at bid proposals for dental insurance. The results were not surprising in that there would be increases, but the percent increase was 12% *lower* than what we were originally told it would be prior to the start of the summer negotiations.

The medical insurance premium will be increasing by 8%, not by the 20% the insurance consultant had told us to expect.

The dental insurance will remain with Florida Combined Life (our current dental plan provider) with a 6.2% increase in premium. The vision plan premium will decrease.

When can I see the actual insurance rates and complete my enrollment?

Full rate and renewal information for the 2018 plan year will be available on or around September 20th and an in-person benefits seminar will be held in the SLCPS Board Room at 5 p.m. on September 26th. The additional plan choice will be explained at that time for those interested. Attending the seminar is not a requirement of enrollment, but we recommend you attend to get your questions answered after reviewing the plan materials. A video will be available afterwards if you are unable to attend.

Do I have to re-enroll if I'm not changing anything?

YES! This year is a full enrollment year and ***if you do not re-enroll, even if you make no changes, you will lose your insurance coverage.***

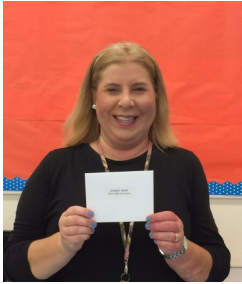
Schedules will be available a week before enrollment starts (see your school secretary) but easy online enrollment starts October 2nd and runs through October 27th. All plan materials are available online prior to open enrollment.

Enrollment: October 2nd—October 27th

Read the *Voice* to Win!!!

Read, *answer the riddles* and SEND your answer to Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org by **September 19, 2017**

1. What did the CTA/CU host at the Welcome Back Celebration?
2. What step was added to the CU salary schedule?

Winners of \$10 Gift Card

Jennifer Moler
Rivers Edge Elem.



Celeste Lafountain
Transportation North

Answers to May Voice Riddles:

1. By how much did the legislature raise the student allotment?
A: \$25
2. By what date must all evaluations be completed?
A: **May 17**

Focus On CU with CU VP Sandy Rohn

Welcome to the new school year. I hope it has been a great start for all of you.

Your Union bargaining team was busy all summer settling our contract. We received a step as well as \$70 added to each step with step 23 added to the salary schedule. It averages a 2.1% increase. If you are on the high deductible insurance you will once again get the \$750 toward your H.S.A. contribution. There is also a third plan being added and you can read all about it in the special bargaining edition of the *Voice* you should have received this summer. Our bus paraprofessionals salary schedule was also increased.

This year it is also in the contract that all support staff must have a written break and lunch schedule. If you do not have one, please contact your school worksite leader or call the office at 464-6430.

It was a very successful settlement for all CU members.

I'm excited to announce that we

will once again have the CU Conference on October 16th which is a teacher workday. Our support staff are hungry for professional development and we are proud to provide this once again. If you attended the conference last year, you know how fun and informative it was. We expect this one to be just as amazing, so keep an eye out for information about registration at the end of September.

Did you know that if you are asked to stay after working hours for a meeting or event, you can request to be paid your regular salary or comp time? It is **your** choice. If the administrator does not want to pay you, you do not have to stay! Have a respectful conversation with your administrator in advance of any event. And please, support your co-worker if they can't stay due to a second job or child care issues.

I hope you all have a good month and remember, we are stronger together, Sandy.

2016-2017 District Success Doesn't Minimize Pressures

As a school district, St. Lucie Public Schools achieved its first-ever "B" rating from the state for 2016-2017. This rating was made possible by a combination of factors and everyone associated with SLPS can be proud of what WE did together.

The school grade and district grades are obviously only one measure of the success of a school/district. Educators understand that. Parents and the community? Not so much. So, the pressure is still on to do more, achieve more, and succeed more. We can argue about what we are doing, achieving, or succeeding at in a different forum, but we all know that expectation is still there even as these same community members and parents want their children to be tested less and play more.

The disconnect here is stunning and sometimes paralyzing for a system trying to be everything to everyone. The cynical among us believe this "knife juggler" approach is by legislative design and destined to crush the overall system.

The pressure is on Principals to use data for everything. A new data tool is being unveiled to principals in early September that is purported to be "a game changer" by those who developed it and saw the need for it. Apparently ALL the data needed will be in the same place, making it easier to look at and compare. We shall see. No doubt, a laser focus on certain data in schools has led to a laser focus on measures to improve areas that were previously untouched. This is a

good thing. But like anything good for you, too much of a good thing can also harm you. We are precariously close to tipping the balance in this area. Educators disdain becoming data analysts and number crunchers—a mental conflict if we are really looking at the "whole child" and not at a number as a measure of which "bucket" this child can move from or to. For leaders this is a far cry from the culture and human side that leads to real sustainable results are to be achieved.

The impact of principals' stress comes down to teachers in the form of detailed planning checklists and pronouncements of what planning "should be". It would seem they have forgotten

Continued on page 2

By the Numbers:

Total union members who resigned, retired or left the district since June:

253

Total new members who joined the union since July 1:

200

Number of new contributors to the union's political action committee, TIGER-PAC, in August:

17

Number of SLPS School Board meetings a month:

2

Negotiations Corner

After nearly a full year of non-stop negotiations on both full book contracts for CTA and CU, it's a relief to once again have ratified contracts good for another three years.

But in a collaborative bargaining environment, negotiation is never really over. We use the collaborative problem-solving process to work through the issues that come up throughout the year, even if it doesn't always lead to contract language. In fact, often the problem-solving process is to clarify the existing language.

This year, we are once again back to work and have the first scheduled meeting of the Collaborative Bargaining Steering Committee on September 19th at 9:00 a.m. At this time, we will sit down for several hours with both full bargaining teams to determine what areas of need we have with regard to problem-solving or negotiation.

One mutual area of concern is stemming the tide of teachers who leave the district for our neighboring districts in search of higher pay or "greener grass" for working conditions. The need to increase beginning teacher salaries while maintaining parity through the pay plans for all current employees is a challenge, especially with pay-for-performance.

Another area of need is the concern with staffing high need schools or those in DA. Right now, despite the added pressures and workload, there are no real financial or working condition incentives to move from a less challenging school to one of the high need schools.

Finally, we still have the planned continued negotiations for additional compensation THIS YEAR depending on financial circumstances after FTE. Look for bargaining updates monthly to keep up-to-date on it all.

Success Leads to More Pressure and Performance Anxiety

that by giving teachers MORE flexibility last year in utilizing unit assessments (a step back from the minute-by-minute approach) these same teachers were able to achieve great gains and help schools jump from a lower grade to a higher one? Seems like it.

The natural inclination of a Principal (who is also feeling the pressure to maintain or increase) is a desire to control more of what teachers do to get the same or a better result, but there is a law of diminishing returns at play here and there is guidance and then there is over-burdensome micro-management.

While we don't dispute the need

to maintain and build on last year's success, and agree that a year's growth is a reasonable expectation to make of a year's teaching, there are *methods* and then there is *madness*.

As a union, we believe in accountability for all and reasonable measures of that accountability. We also believe in teaching as an art and that not everything can be parsed out about a child on an Excel spreadsheet. We also believe that teachers, like their students, are unique and diverse professionals and should be treated that way. Forcing adults to "shush" in a room while they are supposed to be collaborating on lesson plans and insisting they type their plans

while the collaboration is taking place is just silly and shows not a "lack of technological fluidity" as one of our teachers was recently told at a planning meeting (she'd said she preferred to take notes on a legal pad and type them later), but a dire lack of leadership skill and ability to manage with flexibility. Your way, doesn't necessarily have to be my way, if we both end up at the same desired destination when we need to get there.

So, it would be well for all of us to remember that there are methods and then there is madness and one should not lead to the other.

**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
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

WANT A FREE FITBIT?



If you have Florida Blue medical insurance through the District you can access the Better You Diabetes Prevention Program.

This lifestyle improvement program is designed to help you lose weight and reduce your risk of Type 2 Diabetes. It's available at absolutely no cost.

Take the 1-minute quiz at solera4me.com/stlucie or call 877-486-0141 (between 9 am - 9 pm) to see if you qualify.

Plus, if you qualify, enroll, and complete four weeks, you will receive a **free Fitbit Flex™ or Zip®** as part of the program.

Executive Board Seat Available

On August 29th, the Executive Board and Officers regretfully accepted the resignation of long-time Board member and CU Secretary Cynthia Poole.

Pursuant to the SLCTA/CU Constitution and By-Laws, the position of CU Secretary will be filled by appointing an eligible CU member to the position.

Members interested in being considered to fill this position until the end of Poole's current term should send a letter of interest to Vicki Rodriguez, President via email by September 15, 2017. vicki.rodriguez@floridaea.org

To be considered you must have been a member for a min. of 3 consecutive years.

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 unionplus.org/att 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.



Extra!

Extra!

Extra!

Tutoring for the General Knowledge Exam.

St. Lucie Public Schools are once again offering tutoring for the General Knowledge exam. This is a free tutoring opportunity for all teachers in St. Lucie. Participants must register in ERO in order to attend the General Knowledge tutoring sessions. There are a maximum of 30 seats per session.

Contact Laurie Boyer through email: Laurie.Boyer@stlucieschools.com or by calling (772) 429-3600 for further information.

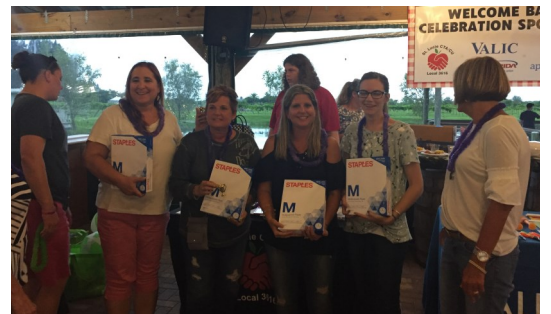
General Knowledge Tutoring at District Office				
Dates	Group	Location	Times	Content
Session One				
Math SRN- 05220818170909; Reading SRN- 05220818170935				
Registration is OPEN				
9/12	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
9/14	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
9/26	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
9/28	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
10/3	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
10/5	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
10/10	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
10/12	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
10/17	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
10/19	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
10/24	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
10/26	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
Session Two				
Math SRN- 05220818170928; Reading SRN- 05220818170950				
Registration Opens 10/22/17				
11/7	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
11/9	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
11/14	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
11/16	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
11/28	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
11/30	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
12/5	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
12/7	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
12/12	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
12/14	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
12/19	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
12/21	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
Session Three				
Math SRN- 05220818170930; Reading SRN- 05220818170952				
Registration Opens 12/17/17				
1/16	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
1/18	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
1/23	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
1/25	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
1/30	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
2/1	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
2/6	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
2/8	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
2/13	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
2/15	K-12 Teachers	Student Services Room 237	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing
2/20	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Math
2/22	K-12 Teachers	Community Room	5:00-6:30	▪ Reading/Writing

Welcome Back Celebration at
Summer Crush Vineyard and Winery

Presented by the SL Education Foundation
Co-sponsored by CTA/CU and VALIC



Teachers and ESP's participate in the Trivia Tournament hosted by the CTA/CU. Winning team members received a coveted ream of copy paper as their prize



St. Lucie CTA/CU FYRE chapter host a meet and greet social at Shindigs in Port St. Lucie.

