



The VOICE

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The Social Media Microscope and “U”

In the last few weeks, our country has become embroiled in heated debate about what employees have the right to do while working. Now that’s not really the heart of the debate, but for our purposes here we will think of the players in the NFL as workers. Unionized workers, in fact.

In general, employees are limited in their rights when it comes to free speech on the job with regard to criticizing their employer or acting in the place of the employer as a representative. The courts have taken up this issue a number of times with some conflicting results, but basically have upheld the right of the employer to restrict employees from promoting their personal views while on the job or while acting on the employer’s behalf. The NFL is a private employer and chose, by and large, to support their players statement while on the field. From a management vs. labor standpoint, the entire thing was interesting to watch.

As public employees, teachers and education employees in particular, we sometimes walk a thin line between our public speech and our private speech. In general, we are entitled to express our thoughts and opinions on matters of public policy and politics when those thoughts and opinions are clearly expressed as an individual. That is, on your personal social media and done on your *own time*. However, as a government employee, education employees have the added burden, especially when they don’t agree with their employer, to maintain a very clear delineation between advocating as a private citizen and as an employee.

A really good example of this

comes in the controversy with school testing and opting out. Educators who choose to opt out their own children and speak of why they are doing so on their Facebook page are entitled to do so, but where the line blurs is when the same person seeks to encourage other parents to do so and utilizes a PTA meeting at their school to speak out and encourage it. At that point, whether you are speaking as an individual or as a representative of the school becomes less clear.

Facebook dilemmas are a primary reason we always recommend that educators utilize the most stringent privacy settings, allowing only their friends (not colleagues, parents, or students—who should not be their friends unless they are true “off the clock” friends) to see their social media. Your private life should not co-mingle with your professional work life.

It is commonly thought that educators check their rights at the door when they enter a school building because they are held to a “Professional Code of Ethics” and a higher standard. While this is not true, a bit of common sense should prevail when interacting on social media. Colleague “Friends” are often the ones who screen shot your posts and run to your principal because you thought the pep rally was poorly organized and there you are answering awkward questions, not leading to a discipline issue, from your supervisor. These same “friends” show your supervisor their phone and your posted pictures from Fantasy Fest in Key West where you wore a risqué outfit complete with a dog collar.

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Upcoming Events

October 12: Degrees Not Debt Seminar—CTA Office

October 13: End of 1st 9 weeks

October 16: CU Conference and 1/2 PD 1/2 Workday

October 25: New Member Night

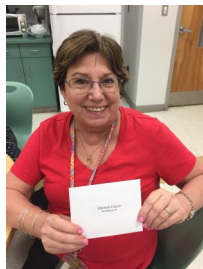


Read the *Voice* to Win!!!

Read, *answer the riddles* and SEND your answer to

Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org by October 17, 2017

1. What position on the Executive Board is currently open?
2. What was the purpose of the Benefits Rep training?

Winners of \$10 Gift Card

Patricia Crocco
Oak Hammock K8



Trish Hawkey
Southport Middle

Answers to September Voice Riddles:

1. What did the CTA/CU host at the Welcome Back Celebration?
A: Trivia Tournament
2. What step was added to the CU salary schedule?
A: Step 23

Focus On CU with CU VP Sandy Rohn

Were you aware that the process and forms for your Evaluation has changed? Through collaboration the Union and the District created a rubric for each area of the CU evaluation.

For each Performance Indicator, a rubric was designed to help employees know exactly what needs to be done in order to receive an *Exceptional*, *Above Expectation*, or a *Meets Expectation*.

The indicators now included are: *Attendance, Policies and Procedures; Initiative; Customer Service/Work Relationships; Job Knowledge; Productivity; and Quality of Work.* *Attendance, Policies and Procedures* can only be rated as *Meets Expectations, Improvement Expected or Unsatisfactory.*

The purpose of these changes is to let you know up front what is expected in order to receive an *Exceptional, Above Expectations or Meets Expectation.*

You should have already met with your administrator to discuss these changes and received a copy of the Rubric and the Evaluation Form.

Please contact the CTA/CU office if you have any questions concerning your Evaluation.

SLCTA/CU President Lobbies in Washington

Aside from serving the members of the St. Lucie CTA/CU locally, CTA/CU President Vicki Rodriguez travels to Washington D.C. this month as part of the American Federation of Teachers Teacher Program Policy Council.

While there, Rodriguez and her fellow union leaders from around the country will participate in meetings regarding issues impacting teachers and their unions nationally such as the Supreme Court's decision to take up the *Janus* case which could strip non-

right-to-work state unions of the ability to charge agency fees (fees that they charge for bargaining the contract for all) thereby effectively crippling public sector unions representing teachers and nurses across the country.

The group will also spend time on Capital Hill lobbying members of Congress on a number of important issues including health care and the potential disastrous effects of limiting Medicaid reimbursements to school districts, full funding for ESEA,

IDEA, and programs like Title I and II.



SLCTA/CU President Vicki Rodriguez, in front of the Capitol, ready to lobby for her members.

By the Numbers:

Total followers on CTA/CU official Facebook page:

1085

Total CTA/CU posts during Hurricane Irma and the aftermath to keep members informed:

38

Dollar amount of Irma Relief gift-cards for members with needs:

\$100.00

Total number of hours to be made up due to Irma:

8

Negotiations Corner

Due to Hurricane Irma, a number of planned meetings for collaborative bargaining were cancelled in the month of September.

In particular, the annual planning meeting for the Steering Committee for Collaborative Bargaining had to be rescheduled and the new meeting date is October 12th at 8 a.m. at the CTA/CU office on Midway Road since the school district offices are uninhabitable.

As part of that meeting, we will be able to map out the committees that will work this year for collaborative problem-solving.

Among issues we want to address are ongoing concerns regarding planning time. It appears that while clarity was achieved in the contract regarding what was and wasn't "official planning time", non-student contact time for planning during the day was summarily changed to everyone having planning first thing in the a.m. creating added stress for teachers.

Moving forward into November, we also will be looking to go over FTE numbers and district finances (more tricky now following the district office destruction) to negotiate additional compensation if available.

Tips to Avoid Coming Under the Social Media Microscope

from page 1

While yes, you DO have a right to your personal life, putting your personal life under the microscope at work is unnecessary and avoidable.

Keep in mind that your private communications, the people you associate with as friends, and your activities as part of a union are all protected. So, while you may use the most salty of language in private texts and emails to friends or participate in a union protest outside of a local legislator's office, all of that is protected by the Constitution, even if your employer doesn't like it.

Consider these tips to avoid problems:

* NEVER accept friend requests from your supervisor, your students (even former ones if their friends are still in school), your students' parents, or colleagues who are just acquaintances. Explain that you keep your FB and other social media so you can unplug from anything work-related.

* Utilize stringent privacy settings for all posts, tweets, etc. You can change your settings for each post, if you desire to. Every time you post something publically think, "If this was on the front page of the paper, would I lose my job?" That's a good measuring tool.

* Be discreet in posting/commenting/messaging others. That stuff can be deleted, but never goes away. If you don't want anyone to know, then don't utilize technology to share it with "just one person".

* Limit political conversations to appropriate times and places. Usually the teacher lounge isn't the place. We live in volatile times, and while the people you may be talking to might be like-minded, the person sitting at the next table can't wait to run down the hall to tell how uncomfortable you made them feel during their lunch.

* When in doubt, use common sense.

**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



IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Schedule your appointment with a Professional Benefits Counselor at www.myenrollmentschedule.com/stlucie or call 1-866-998-2915 today!

ENROLLMENT DATES:
October 2, 2017 through October 27, 2017

This year's enrollment is **MANDATORY**.
You must re-enroll. Your current benefits will **NOT** rollover for the 2018 plan year if you do not complete an enrollment.

Visit a Professional Benefits Counselor to be entered in a chance to win one of many amazing raffle prizes!

FBMC Benefits Management, Inc.
P.O. Box 1876, Tallahassee, Florida 32302-1878
FBMC Service Center 1-855-LUCIE4U (1-855-582-4348)
www.myFBMC.com

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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 October 15, 2017. vicki.rodriguez@floridaea.org



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AFT A Union of Professionals
AFT + Member Benefits

UNIONPLUS



SLC FYRE'S
DEGREES
NOT DEBT
OCT. 12TH

**LEARN ABOUT YOUR STUDENT
LOAN OPTIONS!**

**Public Service Loan
Forgiveness**

**Income driven repayment
options**

Increased use of grants

(772) 464-6430

**FACEBOOK US!
@ SLC FYRE**

**Open to ALL
SLC Schools
Employees**

@ SLC CTA/CU OFFICE

**371 East Midway Road,
Fort Pierce, 34983**

Dinner @ 4:45

Presentation

5:15-6:45

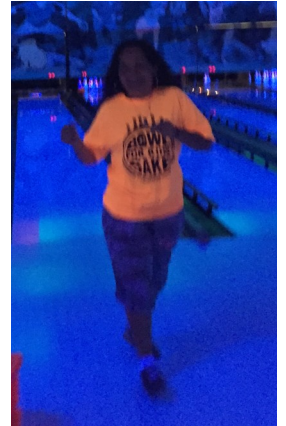
RSVP Today

772-464-6430

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

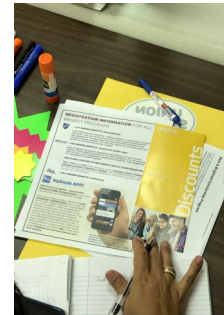
Oct. 3, 2017
Extra!

On September 23, CTA/CU sponsored two teams for the Bowl for Kids' Sake tournament in support of Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie County. One team had bumpers, the other did not. Can you guess which was which?



The Benefits Rep Training held at the CTA/CU office was a great success. The group learned about the cost-saving benefits and discounts available to our members.

Participants created posters to hang at each school with interesting information about available benefits and discounts.



Michelle Young, FEA
Members Benefits Specialist shares information.

