



# The VOICE

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## Upcoming Events

April 18: New Member Night at CTA/CU office

April 25: Administrative Professionals Day

May 1: Worksite Leader meeting

May 3: Tiger PAC meeting

"There is an old saying that the course of civilization is a race between catastrophe and education. In a democracy such as ours, we must make sure that education wins the race."

--John F. Kennedy

## David Freeland: A Union Story . . .

I am your new CTA/CU President and I'd like to introduce myself by telling you my "union story."

I have been a union member my entire career in, well, everything that had a union available to me. My first union job was in Wisconsin, a state that had been a very strong labor state until recently when voters elected their own "Scott."

I taught in three different districts in Wisconsin. I learned quickly that local unions, even in a labor friendly state, vary in their effectiveness. My union in a rural farming community was relatively weak while my union in Madison was strong. Administrators crossed MTI at their peril.

Then I moved to Florida. Until I moved here, I had never heard of a "right-to-work" state. It was hard for me to wrap my head around. Unions in Florida functioned differently than their brother and sister organizations in labor friendly states. Some were stronger than others, much like "up north" but they organized, negotiated and handled member issues differently.

It was tough for me to adjust to, and I worked in three different Florida districts until I landed in St. Lucie county.

When I got here, it was during one of the really financially lean periods – and our steps were not coming from the district. This was the last straw for me, I didn't understand how steps were not automatic. Our salary was part of our contracts in Wisconsin. Once agreed upon, they were automatic for the 3 years the contract was in force.

Well, I turned into "one of those guys." I ranted and raged, I couldn't understand how our union could negotiate this nonsense. How did we let them stick us with no steps? I was sure I knew how to do it better.

Fortunately I was willing to learn, and Vicki and Vanessa were patient with me – I can

only imagine the rants on their side in private! The solution was to invite me to be a part of the negotiating team. That was the year we made Grinchmas trees and the famous "Christmas Goose" story was written.

I didn't actually do a lot that time around. I co-wrote the Christmas Goose story and I had some input, especially about the math involved, but mostly I listened and learned.

And I learned. And I learned.

The reward was being allowed to sit on the insurance sub-committee. I think it was my math and spreadsheet ability, but it could have been just to keep me contained. I was still shaky on why we worked the way we worked but as part of the team I was not in a position to rant and rave. At least not publicly.

It was on the insurance committee that I learned about what our collaborative system actually means and what it can do for our members in the long run. I was sold.

And I learned and I learned.

I also took the chance and ran for the Executive Board and I was elected. Where I learned and I learned.

I started to learn how the union was structured locally as well as at the state level. I learned about our constitution and bylaws. I learned about labor law in actual practice. I learned a lot about how we resolve tricky cases for our members. I went to the state delegate assembly and started to learn who's who in our union and they got to know who I was. Still baby steps, but important ones. I learned a lot. I kept learning at every meeting.

I learned and I learned.

*(Continued on page 3)*

**Read the *Voice* to Win!!!**

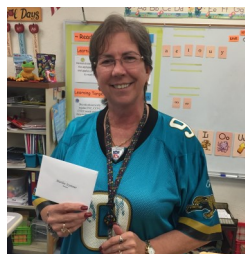
Read, *answer the riddles* and SEND your answer to [Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org](mailto:Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org) by **April 23, 2018**

1. What is the current CTA/CU density?
2. What is the date that non-instructional staff will be notified of non-reappointment?

**Winners of \$10 Gift Card**



**Ginette Brevil-Burlinson**  
SLW Centennial High



**Marilee Seymour**  
Manatee K-8

**Answers to March Voice Riddles:**

1. What percentage of Floridians are not in favor of arming teachers?  
**A:** 56%
2. What is the purpose of HB 7055?  
**A:** Decertify education unions

**Focus On CU with CU VP Sandy Rohn**

Hi all, I can't believe it's April, but sometimes it feels like it should be June.

Last month we told you about HB25 and HB7055. Sadly, both bills passed.

If you remember, they were aimed at decertifying any Union that represents those in education only. This means that any Union that works with students in PUBLIC education and has less than 50% density, (meaning if we have 700 potential members and less than 50% join we would be below that density) would have to reapply to represent you which is a very long and complicated process. In the meanwhile, you'd have no contract and no voice.

Our Union is secure at this time, but we must be vigilant. How does this impact you? If your Union goes away, so does your contract—all protections

that you have under the current contract would be stripped away.

What can you do? If you have friends or co-workers who are not members, please ask them to join us. We are under attack at a state level and we must stick together. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or the CTA/CU office at any time. We are always fighting for your rights to be safe and secure in your career; you must fight for yourselves also.

As a reminder, after you have had 25 years of service with the district as non-instructional staff, you should be receiving a \$1000 a year bonus. If you are not sure if you are receiving the bonus, please contact your assigned personal contact person.

Remember, we are stronger together, Sandy

**Preparations for Next Year Include Reappointment**

Even though the year is not over yet, it's time for us to start thinking about next year. The first step is employment renewals.

For annual contract employees, this means knowing deadlines for notification and renewal.

For teachers on a professional services contract or a continuing contract, you will not receive a letter of reappointment. The notifications are only for those who are being non-reappointed.

It's important to note that teachers who have not completed

certification requirements cannot be officially reappointed without proof of completion of requirements.

**INSTRUCTIONAL**

April 30: Final observations and DPP's must be completed.

May 9: Instructional staff not being recommended for reappointment for the 2018 –2019 school year will be notified in writing.

**NON-INSTRUCTIONAL**

May 1: Support staff not being

recommended for reappointment for the 2018-2019 school year will be notified in writing.

Remember, non-instructional staff (CU) must be given a reason for non-reappointment in their letter.

Also, non-instructional staff earn a continuing status after 3 successful years of employment.

Remember, we are always here to help in any way we can.

CTA/CU office—(772) 464-6430

**By the Numbers:**

# Negotiations Corner

- ◆ New union members in March:

**34**

- ◆ Percentage union density of CTA/ CU (up .32% in March):

**66.32%**

- ◆ Number of 2018 CTA/CU Election volunteers from SLCTA/ CU Retiree Chapter:

**8**

- ◆ Date of School Board Candidate CTA/CU Interviews

**14**

First, we continue to work to secure the additional funding for CU raises or bonuses that the district promised to make a priority when the FTE numbers were available.

Those numbers became available earlier this spring and the district agreed to additional compensation for our instructional members.

When we began to discuss additional compensation for our non-instructional members, the district stated they were not prepared to discuss additional compensation at this time.

A number of additional negotiation sessions have had the same results.

Recent events and budget constraints related to safety and security were cited as the reason the district was unwilling to discuss

additional compensation for non-instructional staff.

These conversations are not over and we are still as determined as ever, especially since we are now talking about non-recurring bonuses for CU (just like what we were able to secure for teachers).

In addition to this work, we are simultaneously preparing for 2018-2019 negotiations under the cloud of the legislature's dismal 47 cents per student increase for next year. We have faced similar challenges and will work through these as well.

In the coming weeks, look for the 2018-2019 Bargaining Survey to arrive electronically so we can hear our members' negotiating priorities going forward. Please take the time to answer when you receive it.

## A Union Story . . . (continued from page 1)

During this time I became a testing coordinator. I wrote a report. I put numbers on what was happening, and FEA invited me up to Tallahassee to present my report and to testify. That was an experience. The first-time testifying is nerve wracking for a lot of reasons. But I made it through. I learned a lot. I was invited to lobby the following year. I learned a lot. Then I started to lobby independently. I learned a lot.

I learned and I learned and I learned.

I also was asked to be the union's chief negotiator. That first year was more like being the intern negotiator. I thought I had learned a lot. I had. But there was a lot more to learn. The rules and laws that govern negotiation. How important specific words can be because they have legal consequences. I learned a lot that first year.

I learned and I learned.

Now, I have become the president of the St. Lucie CTA/CU. I am still not sure how that happened, but I know that I'll be learning a lot. Over the years, I have been involved in almost every facet of our union via the negotiating team, on the E-Board, as a Worksite Leader, and as chief negotiator, and there is still a lot to learn.

Have you noticed a theme here yet? I learned and I learned. My experience has been critical to what I do, and what I will be doing. Experiences give the opportunity to learn, learn, learn.

Can you imagine how well things would go for our union if I had no or little experience? My experience in Wisconsin adds background, but it is not really relevant to what I do in Florida. It just isn't. To be successful, I'm going to need every bit of the real, relevant, and recent experiences I've had here in Florida.

Time spent as a Worksite Leader, or serving

a short time on our Executive Board, or experience in a labor friendly state years ago just isn't the kind of experience that will allow an individual to be successful as an elected officer of our local union. It takes time and dedication. It takes experience.

I am feeling just a bit overwhelmed at the moment, but I have relevant experience to draw upon and we have an outstanding staff and the best members of any local in the state. I'll do my best to surround myself with experienced people and to give new faces opportunities to learn and to become the leaders we will need for the future. And we'll continue to move forward and be successful.

And we'll learn and we'll learn. Together.

In Solidarity,

David

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

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**CTA/CU Executive Board**

**David Freeland**, 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  
**Mona Webb**, Secretary CU: Transportation  
**Tammy Davis**, CTA Executive Board: FKS  
**Alan Mathison**, CTA, Executive Board: LPA  
**Aurea Justo**, CTA Executive Board: FLN  
**Pamela Jenkins**, Executive Board CU: SLWC

**Union Staff**

**Maureen Sinnott**/ Member Support Specialist  
**Lucy Bravo**/ Organizing and Communications Specialist  
**Barbara Ziegler**/ Office Manager

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**End of Year Evaluation-Be Your Own Advocate!**

It is that time again when we will be meeting with our administrators to get our final Instructional Practice Score (IPS). The two most important dates to remember are April 30 (final observations and DPP's completed) and May 2 (evaluations completed in iObservation). Failure to meet these dates makes your final evaluation score eligible for appeal.

**What should be completed by these dates:**

Category 1.1 teachers - 4 informals and 2 formal observations.  
Category 1.2, 1.3 and 2.2 teachers - 3 informals and 1 formal observation.

Formal observations must be a minimum of 1 class period or 45 minutes in length and written feedback is required within 10 days as part of a post conference.

Informal observations must be at least 10 minutes in length and feedback is provided within 3 days.

**Don't Forget the D.P.P.!**

The score of the D.P.P. is added to your final IPS score and can only help your overall score. Remember to check that your chosen elements have been rated. If they haven't, you can't get credit. Schedule a time for your principal to come in and rate them in another informal. There is a responsibility on *both sides* to make sure this is done.

**Deviations from Protocols and Your Right to Appeal**

Deviations from negotiated evaluation protocols can render your final evaluation appealable. Here are the deviations to look for:  
Conducting fewer than the required number of observations.  
Observations taking place without the required time between them for reflection and improvement.

Lack of written feedback on any observation for an area marked below "applying".

Failure to conduct a post-conference within the required timeframe.

Failure to adhere to the timeline for conducting informals/formals.

Failure to schedule or conduct review conferences with non-classroom instructional teachers for the purpose of evaluation.

Including non-objective feedback in any portion of the observation's written feedback.

**Planning to Appeal?**

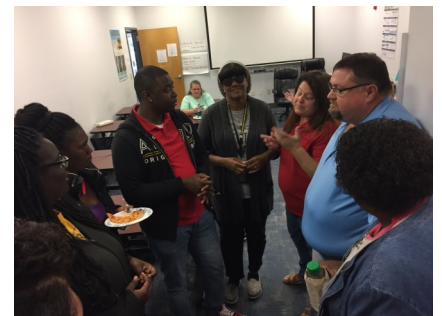
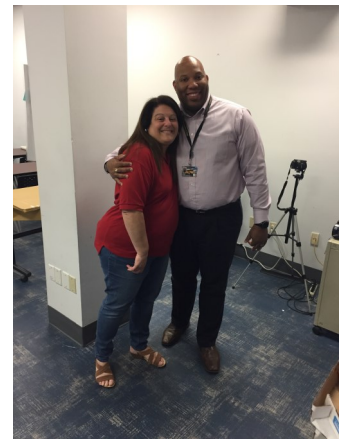
Whether you plan to appeal or not, it is recommended that you Make A Hard Copy of ALL Documents pertinent to your evaluation. If you are non-reappointed, you will not have access to iObservation after your contract ends. You may speak to your Worksite Leader at your school or call/email the union office if you need more information. The Union cannot help if you wait too long, or fail to inform us altogether.

You can check out the full negotiated protocol document for evaluations by going to the District website under the EMPLOYEES tab.



The VOICE St. Lucie Classroom Teachers' Association and Classified Unit **April 13, 2018**  
**Extra! Extra! Extra!**

The week of March 26, 2018 was bittersweet as various groups said good-bye and best wishes to outgoing CTA/CU President Vicki Rodriguez. Vicki is moving on to take a position with Florida Education Association where she will continue the hard work of union organizing and advocacy.





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

**April 3, 2018**  
**Extra!**



**Vicki Rodriguez:**  
**Leader**  
**Advocate**  
**Ally**



Farewell, CTA/CU President,

Vicki Rodriguez

Best Wishes for your Continued  
Success on your Professional  
Journey.

“Go get ‘em!”

From your CTA/CU office family:  
Chris, Lucy, Barb and Maureen

