



# The VOICE

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## Upcoming Events

January 21: Holiday for All—MLK Day

January 23: Early Release (PD day)

February 1: CU Conference

February 1: Workday/ Professional Development Day (Teachers)

February 1: Certificate Renewal Event

February 5: Worksite Leader Business meeting at the Shrine Club

## Taking Care of Ourselves Means We Can Take Better Care of Our Students

Given the education headlines of the day... "Governor promotes dismantling the public school system", "New FL Ed Commissioner an enemy of teachers" and more, it's going to be hard to focus on pushing forward and continuing to do the important work of educating St Lucie's children.

But we cannot let what appears to be a hopeless situation defeat us or make us feel defeated.

At the end of the day, there are 40,000 children in our St Lucie schools that are looking to their teachers, paraprofessionals, bus aides, interpreters and everyone they see daily in school to help them receive the world class education they deserve.

So, while we will continue to fight the fight together for better funding and resources, smaller class sizes, professional wages and benefits, and academic freedom for classroom professionals— I want you to also consider what YOU need.

Because without you, each and every one of you, our kids cannot be successful.

Let's make some resolutions together that help all of us improve our working conditions which are our students' learning conditions:

**Find time for yourself** every day, even if it's only for 15 minutes.

**Don't take work home.** If you

feel you "have to", start with picking a day of the week that is no work home day, and stick to it. Give yourself and your family your full attention. Watch TV. Play a board game. Just no school stuff.

**Speak to your colleagues** in the hallway, the copy room, and the parking lot. We are all in this together and a smile or a friendly non-work conversation goes a long way to build relationships.

### **Don't skip lunch or your breaks.**

Step away from your classroom or work area to "reset" and breathe. People tend to make "career mistakes" when hungry, tired, and overwhelmed. Know when you are reaching your limit and step back.

**Ask for help** when you need it or offer it when you see someone in need. Don't be ashamed to seek professional assistance through the free Employee Assistance Program (EAP). It can never hurt to have an unbiased professional support you through difficult times. The number is 1-800-272-3626 <http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/departments/risk-management/Employee-Assistance-Plan.pdf>

In Solidarity,  
David

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

Read, answer the riddles and SEND your answer to [Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org](mailto:Barbara.Ziegler@floridaea.org) by **January 31, 2019**

1. What is the telephone number for the Employee Assistance Program?
2. What date must ballots be returned for the St. Lucie County's referendum

**Winners of \$10 Gift Card**



**Kanosha Anderson-Webb**  
St. Lucie West K8



**Gary Diamond**  
Manatee K8

**Answers to December Voice Riddles:**

1. Where do you find the Education Center for useful tips and information on retirement planning?  
**A:** VALIC.com
2. What is the limit to the amount of sick days accrued for both CTA and CU?  
**A:** (Trick question) - there is no limit to the amount of sick days accrued

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

Hi all, hope everyone had a restful winter break. I want to first thank our Union President David Freeland and the negotiation team for negotiating for us to get the \$250 bonus as well as an increase for this year. He tried to get it last year and couldn't, but he persisted and made sure we received it this year. **Every member** of this Union is important and David and the negotiating team showed that with their dedication to this issue.

As promised, the CU Conference has been rescheduled for **February 1<sup>st</sup>**. The flyer has been sent to all support staff who are members and should be posted on all Union bulletin boards. Please take a moment to send an email to Maureen Sinnott at the CTA/ CU office to sign up as seats are limited and filling up fast.

I would hate for you to miss this conference created just for our hardworking support staff. You are going to love it.

Please make sure to educate yourself about the upcoming referendum in April that will help with increased salaries. If you would like to get involved, contact me or the CTA/CU office asap.

**Did You Know that according to your contract:** the district must provide a lockable space for all CU employees, provide all materials needed to perform their duties, provide off street parking and provide you with access to a computer/work station located in your immediate work area connected to the districts system?

Have a great month and remember, we are stronger together, Sandy

**Your Contract . . . Clarified! Rebecca Petrie, CTA Vice President**

*The Faculty Council is defined as a working group whose purpose is to implement the School Improvement Plan, support the operation of the school, and serve in an advisory capacity to the school principal.*

*As a function of this purpose, the Faculty Council will determine the use of release time on the Early Release Choice Days designated by the District Master Calendar.*

*The Faculty Council shall meet monthly at a minimum and other times as needed.*

The contract goes on to state:

*The school principal shall be the chairperson of the Faculty Council and the CTA/CU appointed additional representative shall serve as the vice-chairperson.*

*The Principal and the vice-chairperson will work together to create the agenda.*

*Tentative agendas for each Faculty Council meeting shall be distributed by email at the school site at least two (2) days prior to the meeting.*

*Agenda items should be submitted to the chair or vice-chairperson at*

*least four (4) days prior to the meeting.*

*Minutes of all meetings shall be distributed by email to the faculty members within one (1) week of the meeting.*

*Minutes of the meetings should also be submitted to the Human Resources office and the CTA/CU office.*

*The Faculty Council shall meet monthly at a minimum and other times as needed.*

*(continued on page 3)*

## By the Numbers:

# of counties with education-related referenda on the ballot in 2018:	20
# of education-related referenda that failed to pass in 2018:	0
# of days until St. Lucie County's referendum election:	97
% of St. Lucie CTA/CU members (and their family, friends, & colleagues) who need to return their mail-in ballots:	100
# of drop-off locations for ballots:	4
*Reminder - ballots are due <b>BY 4/23</b>	

# Negotiations Corner

The new year brings the upcoming 2019 legislative session that begins in March and the run-up to St. Lucie's long-awaited Ad Valorem Tax Referendum in April.

Even if you are "not political" it's imperative this year that you are informed about both of these events because of their direct impact on our compensation and benefits negotiations going forward.

In addition to the education budget, the legislative session may also bring new laws and rules for educators that will have an impact on our contract and how we do our work.

Now is the time to tune in, not tune out.

Please take a moment to sign up for Florida Education Association action alerts so you receive timely updates and can take action to speak to your legislators when needed.

<https://feaactioncenter.org/act/sign-up-for-action-alerts/>

Beyond that, regular negotiations and union/district problem-solving continues at the upcoming Steering Committee meeting on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

It seems that the district has implemented a procedure which mandates employees that are injured at work take an online course, even if they were injured through no fault of their own (student bite, for example).

This is a mandatory subject of bargaining, not to mention a procedure that could have an impact on people reporting their legitimate injuries since they seem to be "punished" with a class if they are injured and report it.

We'll let you know how it goes.

## Your Contract . . . Clarified! (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

***So... what does that actually mean?***

***It means that . . .***

The Faculty Council at your school *should be* meeting on a monthly basis.

The Principal and the Union-appointed representative *should be* working collaboratively to ensure the agenda is created and that all interested parties have had an

opportunity to submit items to be discussed.

That doesn't necessarily mean that each and every item will make it onto the agenda. Some suggestions may be more appropriately handled outside of the Faculty Council.

Minutes *should be* submitted to the CTA/CU President after each meeting.

Also... did you know?

Members of the school's faculty can *observe* at a Faculty Council meeting.

You can submit an agenda item to any Faculty Council representative or submit it directly to the chair and vice-chair for consideration.

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

371 E. Midway Road  
Ft. Pierce, FL 34982  
Office: 772-464-6430 Fax: 772-464-7446

**CTA/CU Executive Board**

David Freeland, President CTA/CU: CTA Office  
Rebecca Petrie, Vice President CTA: CTA Office  
Sandy Rohn, Vice-President CU: FPC  
Laura Lovett, CTA/CU Treasurer: Records Dept.  
Lashawn Floyd, CU Secretary: NK8  
Tammy Davis, CTA Executive Board: FKS  
Alan Mathison, CTA Executive Board: LPA  
Pamela Jenkins, CU Executive Board: SLWC  
Claudia Martin-Vegue, CTA Executive Board:  
SLWK8  
Christine Derry, CTA Executive Board: TCHS

**Union Staff**

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

**E-mail:**

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## Certificate Renewal Event

This event is ONLY for  
employees with Professional  
Certificates expiring 06/30/2019

St. Lucie West Centennial High School

February 1, 2019

10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

RSVP:

Heather Conte

(772) 429 - 7507

RSVP is required!!!

*Hosted by Human Resources*

## VALIC

### Members' Advantage Plan

**Free financial planning for Union members**

Get a no-cost, face-to-face analysis of your current financial situation—plus a comprehensive plan to help you prepare for your financial future.

Provides a personalized analysis of your Florida Retirement System (FRS) Pension Plan, DROP and investment plan options.

**Your Future is Calling. Meet It with Confidence.**

[www.VALIC.com](http://www.VALIC.com)

*Jim McCudden 772.600.2662*

*Ryan Van Buren 772.778.9401*

*Tony Tringali 772.600.2662*

*Whitney Colton 772.778.9401*