



Education Association of St. Lucie LOCAL 3616

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The VOICE

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371 East Midway Road
Ft. Pierce, FL 34982

“OF COURSE WE ARE STRESSED—WE ARE EDUCATORS”

By Maureen Sinnott, Member Support Specialist

How often have we been asked by friends, colleagues or family; “How are you doing?”. And we answer, “Fine”. Because, quite honestly, there aren't enough hours in the day to adequately answer how we are doing.

Between the pandemic, get vaccinated or not get vaccinated, wear a mask or not wear a mask, divisive political rhetoric, social media, being quarantined, all added to the every day stress of simply being educators—it's no wonder that we all haven't gone screaming off in the night to hide in a cave until this is all over!

Unfortunately, some of our colleagues have gone beyond simply being stressed. They may actually be in crisis.

The following are just a few of the common warning signs of a person in crisis:

Excessive fear or anxiety;

Decline in work performance;

Chronic burnout and exhaustion;

Inability to concentrate;

Being depressed or withdrawn for two or more weeks;

Major financial stress;

Loss of any major relationship (break-up or divorce);

Death of friend or family member;

Toxic personal relationship;

Toxic work relationship;

Serious medical diagnosis or chronic illness.

NOTE: This is in no way a complete list of possible warnings sign, nor is it meant to indicate that a person is in crisis if they are exhibiting any of these behaviors.

So how do you support someone in crisis?

1. Inquire—“I've noticed you haven't been yourself lately, are you okay?”
2. Reassure your support—“I'm here for you.” OR “How can I best support you?”
3. Persuade them to get help—“Are you open to calling our EAP (Employee Assistance Program)?”
4. Refer to support—“This is the contact information for our free, confidential EAP. They can help you with what you are going through.”

Dos and Don'ts of supporting your colleagues.

DO: Allow the person to open up about what they are struggling with—without providing judgment.

DON'T: Use terms like “crazy”, “nuts”, “druggie”, etc.

DO: Discuss the support that is available.

DON'T: Suggest that they need to be medicated or give a diagnosis.

DO: Let them know they have your support.

DON'T: Minimize their struggle.

DO: Ask “how can I best support you?”

DON'T: Ignore the warning signs.

Source: AWWWS Training and Consulting: Mental Well-being for Today's Workplace.

Continued on page 3

Focus on CU

with CU Vice-President Sandy Rohn

Hello all and welcome to October...I am hoping things will cool down so we can walk outside without sweating at 6 in the morning.

I hope you read the email I sent about our success at the bargaining table to assure us the same right to grieve a termination as the other bargaining units.

It was a hard-won victory that took several months, but we persevered.

In other news, you should all have received your COVID appreciation monies if you worked last year through the pandemic.

It was a great financial boost that you received due to the efforts of the Union bargaining team. Unfortunately, Classified Unit members in other counties did not receive this money.

We are still at the bargaining table for compensation for this year.

It is not going to be easy as the Governor only sent funds for early career classroom teachers and very little to nothing for non classroom teachers and support staff., but we continue to work for all our members.

A no cost increase in insurance was a significant help, now for a pay increase.

We will keep you updated on our progress through email and our Facebook page.

Please make sure the union office has your correct personal email address.

If you want to help yourselves and our bargaining unit be the best we can be, recruit your co-workers if they are not a member of our union.

There is strength in numbers.

Remember, we are stronger together. Sandy

Your Contract . . . Clarified! with CTA Vice President Rebecca Petrie

CTA Contract

ARTICLE IV - - Teaching Conditions

B. Compensatory Time

1. Events/Activities/Functions

Teachers shall not be required to attend school events or perform functions outside the regular 7.5 hour work day beyond a maximum of 6 hours per year.

All work outside the regular work day shall be compensated either monetarily or with compensatory time.

Teachers shall not be required to attend school events or perform functions on week-ends or holidays.

Use of such time will be approved by the administrator with a result of minimum disruption of the educational program.

In approving requested use of compensatory time, no request will be unjustifiably denied.

Compensatory time must be taken during the current school year in which it was earned.

So... what does that actually mean?

It is important to remember that administrators cannot make blanket statements such as "No comp time use on Fridays."

Also remember that you must use your accrued comp time before the end of the year.

Check with your school's administrative staff for specific school-based record-keeping procedures.

Continued on page 3

Your Contract . . . Clarified! Continued

Continued from page 2

CU Contract

Article V - - Working Conditions

A. General Provisions

5. Compensatory Time

When an employee is required or requested to perform functions before or after the regular work day, this time may be used as compensatory straight time if less than 40 hours in a work week and granted by the appropriate administrator.

Pre-authorized work performed by employees in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week shall be compensated at a rate of one and one-half or compensatory time at one and one-half hours.

This choice is at the option of the

employee.

An employee who has requested use of compensatory time shall be permitted by the employer to use compensatory time in a reasonable period after making the request if the use does not unduly disrupt the operation of the School Board.

In approving requested use of compensatory time, no request will be unjustifiably denied.

a. Compensatory time must be taken during the current school year in which it was granted.

Employees are limited to a maximum of forty hours of accrual.

Compensatory time accrued at the end of the year will be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor

Standards Act.

So... what does that actually mean?

For any work after 40 hours (approved ahead of time), CU personnel can choose to receive overtime pay OR comp time. It is up to you.

You are permitted to accrue up to 40 hours of comp time and whatever is unused at the end of the year will be paid out.

Please feel free to call the office if you need further information or clarification.

What contract language would you like to see clarified? Feel free to contact the office at (772) 464-6430.

Supporting a Coworker in Crisis *continued*

Continued from page 1

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

“the effects of poor mental health in the workplace can include low productivity, poor communication with coworkers, disengagement and poor overall job performance.

Coworkers often have close relationships with one another.

They may see each other and communicate regularly during the workday. Thus co-workers can be instrumental in supporting colleagues who are experiencing difficulties.”

Following are some helpful resources for you or anyone who may need support.

Suicide Crisis Lifeline (800) 273-8255

Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741711

National Alliance on Mental Illness: NAMI.org

Substance Abuse Support: SAM-HSA.Gov

Wellness Wednesday Workshop – October 13

Trying to survive in a stressed-out world and need to learn to pursue peace?

Wellness Wednesday on October 13th at 5 pm is for you!

Let’s take some time to practice peace and spend an hour taking a mental break from the outside noise.

This session with Zonovia Proctor is going to be interactive, calming and a great way to give yourself a midweek breather.

Get more information or register early at feaprovdev@floridaea.org

(Note this Wellness Workshop is FREE for Education Association of St. Lucie members)

**Education Association of St. Lucie
Local 3616**

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Fax: 772-464-7446

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Upcoming Professional Development offered by FEA

Insight Into Inclusive School Culture – October 20

Patrick C. Coggins is a professor of education and multicultural education at Stetson University. He currently serves as chair of the Faculty Senate and is a member of the president's Cabinet of Stetson University. He served as a Jessie Ball DuPont Endowed Chair Professor from 1991-2011. Coggins is the first Caribbean Guyanese professor and holder of an endowed chair at Stetson University. He has had extensive experience designing and teaching courses in cultural diversity, multicultural education ESOL, social studies methods and classes on cross cultural communication. These sessions will provide educators with definitions and insights in using culturally responsive strategies in the classroom, explore the current research on the success and enhancement of student achievement across cultures and examine appropriate applications and strategies which build culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments. Save the dates:

Session 2: Oct. 20 @ 4:30 – 6:30 PM (EST) and Session 3: Nov. 10 @ 4:30 – 6:30 PM (EST)

Teachers of Color Series – October 28

October is National Disability Employment Awareness month. Our guest speaker for the next Teachers of Color meeting will be April Holmes. April is a Paralympic athlete from TEAM USA and has competed to great success in Track and Field sprint events. Off the track Holmes runs the April Holmes Foundation, Inc. a non-profit organization assisting people with physical and learning disabilities with scholarships and medical equipment. Join us on October 28 at 5:30 pm EST to hear April's story and for the interactive learning session.

**To register or any questions Contact feaprodev@floridaea.org
Visit our website: <https://feaweb.org/professional-development/>**

You may be able to obtain in-service points for either of these sessions by using the out-of-district request form on Frontline.

*Let's Talk
Benefits*

Let's Talk Benefits with
Lucy Bravo, Organizing and Member Advocacy Specialist.
This month's focus will be on the union benefit partner



Make a difference and start early!

Get FutureFit and shape your future!

Many times we think we will "never" be able to save? Once you sit down with Whitney Colton, AIG Financial Advisor, you will learn that you can start saving now and financially be able to retire. Starting early can make a difference.

As a union member, financial planning advice is absolutely free. A savings of \$500! Call today and set-up an appointment virtually, via phone, or in person (social distance).

During your appointment you will understand:

- **Why** it's important to start saving

- **The benefits** of participating in your workplace plan
- **The features** of the most common plans offered by employers
- **How** to start saving for a secure future.

Don't delay. Call today



Whitney Colton, AIG Financial Advisor
772-600-2662
Whitney.Colton@AIG.com

**CTA CU Retirees of SLC
Memorial Educator's Innovative Grant Application Form
Due Date: October 31, 2021**

Please type or print this information

Applicant Name(s):	I am a member of FEA ___ yes ___ no	E-Mail:
School:	School Fax:	
School Address City State Zip	Phone:	
Home Address City State Zip	Phone:	
Name of Local Organization:	Local President:	
Grade Level:	Subject Area:	
School Principal's Name (Printed)	School Principal's Name (Signature)	

Criteria: The \$300.00 innovative grant will be allocated for an FEA member for a project that will add to efficient and effective teaching and enhance student learning. After receiving your allocation please send a follow-up report detailing how the money was spent and what was accomplished.

To apply for the CTA CU Retirees Memorial Educator's Innovative Grant, please attach a summary of your proposal (200 words or less) and return it along with this form to 371 E Midway Road, Ft Pierce, FL 34982 or the Retired District Director in your area. (See attached list of District Directors and addresses.)

Signature

Title

Date

**FLORIDA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION RETIRED
Innovative Grant Application Form**

Deadline: October 29, 2021

Please type or print this information.

Applicant Name(s):		Are you a member of FEA?	E-Mail:	
School:			School Fax:	
School Address	City	State	Zip	Phone:
Home Address	City	State	Zip	Phone:
Name of Local Organization:		Local President:		
Grade Level:		Subject Area:		
School Principal's Name (Printed)		School Principal's Name (Signature)		

Criteria: The \$100.00 innovative grant will be allocated to an educator for a project that will add to efficient and effective teaching and enhance student learning. After receiving your allocation, please send a follow-up report detailing how the money was spent and what was accomplished.

To apply for an FEA-Retired Innovative Grant, **Please attach a SUMMARY OF YOUR PROPOSAL (200 words or less) and return it along with this form to your local retiree chapter or your District Director. (See attached list of District Directors and their addresses.)**

Signature

Title

Date