

THE PELICAN POST

Collier County Education Association—Affiliated with FEA/NEA/AFT
Serving the Education Community of Collier County

Vol. XL No. 9

MAY 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As I write this a lot is still unknown-what will August look like?

Please know AFT has done an incredible job in developing a blueprint, "Plan to Safely Reopen America's Schools and Communities."

I want to take my column this month to share the five core pillars the document references:

1. Maintain physical distancing until the number of new cases declines for at least 14 consecutive days. Reducing the number of new cases is a prerequisite for transitioning to reopening plans on a community-by-community basis.
2. Put in place the infrastructure and resources to test, trace and isolate new cases. Transitioning from community-focused physical distancing and stay-in-place orders to case-specific interventions requires ramping up the capacity to test, trace and isolate each new case.
3. Deploy the public health tools that prevent the virus' spread and align them with education strategies that meet the needs of students.
4. Involve workers, unions, parents and communities in all planning. Each workplace and community faces unique challenges related to COVID-19. To ensure that reopening plans address those challenges, broad worker and community involvement is necessary. They must be engaged, educated and empowered.
5. Invest in recovery: Do not abandon America's communities or forfeit America's future. These interventions will require more—not less—investment in public health and in our schools, universities, hospitals, and local and state governments. Strengthening communities should be a priority in the recovery.

The entire document can be viewed (it is 22 pages) on our website under the Members Only tab. CCEA has shared this document with CCPS District Leadership.

Although school is being completed through distance learning we know there are still concerns regarding working conditions and such-know that it is the priority of both staff and leadership to address these concerns in a timely manner. With that said-some of the accomplishments of the recent weeks have also benefited potential members-if you have the time please consider reaching out to potential members and

ask them to join the organization that advocates for their livelihood. If you do not know who the potential members are at your school-email me and I will get you that list within 24 hours!

We have scheduled CCEA's Summer Leadership to be August 1st from 9am-2pm-as of this moment we have not yet decided whether it will be virtual or in person. State Leadership will be present. When you read this you will have a few weeks until summer-so please use that time to recharge and take care of yourself and your loved ones.

*In Unity,
Lisa*



WHAT DOES THE CORONAVIRUS MEAN TO YOU? OUR CCEA DUES AT WORK!

Who would every guess that in 2020 the World would have a Coronavirus Pandemic? It is really unbelievable! I have been grateful for the opportunity to work from home with eLearning. The CCEA has done an outstanding job to represent teachers across the CCPS system...having a seat at the table to put our voice front and center. No one knows when it will end, so as we wait for a vaccine, the next school year remains a mystery as to how it will function. Knowing that CCEA will be leading the fight for the safety of teachers and students makes me feel that my dues have been well spent. If you are not a member of the CCEA, there is no better time to join. Put aside all your partisan issues and do the right thing. Join CCEA for a seat at the table for our voices to be heard. There is strength in numbers! Our best opportunity is to have the CCEA represent us on how the next school year will work and having a seat at the table, will give us the voice we need to have a safe start.

Join today!

Julie Abalos CCEA Member ENMS

SUMMER COMMUNICATION

Be sure to confirm/update your home email address so that you receive communications throughout the Summer.

Send a message to rhonda.shimel@floridaea.org from the home email you are currently using so that we are able to connect with you. Thank you!

TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS

While working remotely has caused a significant drop in member rights' cases in Collier County, there are still legal and disciplinary issues that a few CCEA members have found themselves in since the Covid-19 virus has shut down schools. Technology, which is a marvel when it works, can sometimes create situations that can get teachers in trouble if they are not careful.

This month there have been three instances where CCEA members found themselves being called by administration for mishaps that occurred while using computers and cell phones. CCEA was there to protect our members in these "virtual" principal meetings. All could have been avoided by taking a few precautions.

- One teacher asked another to help him because he was having a very difficult time with the computer platform TEAMS. They were unaware that what was being said was being recorded and could be heard by the entire school staff. Some derogatory comments about other staff members were exchanged, all the while thinking they were having a private conversation.
- A high school department group text was initiated by a Department Head. Several hours later, two of the department members continued texting, thinking they were just talking to each other. Their disparaging remarks about staff, students, and parents were all on a group text for everyone to see.
- Many teachers are using their cell phone to contact parents/students during the virtual learning process. A teacher accidentally sent a text to a student when she thought it was going to her adult friend.

While all of these could be explained away as carelessness, it is important to remember in these abnormal times that teachers are still held to a certain ethical standard and can find themselves in violation of CCPS School Board policies even when teaching from their living room. CCEA members should take the same precautions when using technology now as in the past.

1. Always assume anything emailed, texted, or recorded will be seen by administration.
2. Adopt the thinking that someone will tell administration. While all the above were successfully dealt with by CCEA and no disciplinary action resulted for our members, in every case, someone went to administration. If you don't want your Principal to see it, don't put it out there. Period.
3. Don't use your personal phone. Go through the district's JABBER system. As a legal matter, if a case gets to the courts your personal phone can be subpoenaed.

Remember that CCEA is here for you. As a member, you have legal protection anytime the district attempts to suspend or terminate you. If DCF or the Sheriff's department wants

To talk to you, a FEA lawyer will be provided. You can also register for free access to basic legal benefits for issues outside employment matters. This gives you:

- Free initial thirty-minute consultation with a lawyer
- 25% discount off attorney's hourly or flat rate fees after that
- Over 6,800 participating law firms
- Virtually all types of legal matters are eligible
- After registration, you'll be provided with the toll-free number to call for a referral

Registration can be done online, but you will need to verify union membership.

<https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/home/legal-help>

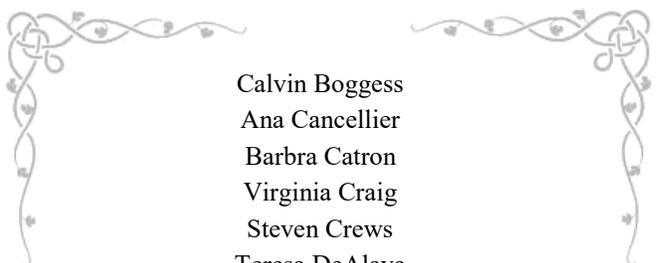
Lyle Farmar, Member Rights Advocate

2020 CCEA RETIREES

Congratulations on your retirement and we hope that you will carry with you fond and loving memories of your school days. Thank you for your dedication to the students of CCPS. Your teaching has profoundly influenced a generation of youth!

We know you'll miss your students and colleagues at school, but not saying goodbye to early mornings and testing. We send you off with well wishes for much happiness and success in your well-deserved retirement.

BEST WISHES!



Calvin Bogess

Ana Cancellier

Barbra Catron

Virginia Craig

Steven Crews

Teresa DeAlava

Mary Ely

Rebecca Endrelunas

Kim Forrestal

Amy Glass

Denise Gosselin-Rubiano

Karen Hancock

Cathy Hargis

Martha Johnson

Maria Jones

Michelle Lee

Maryellen Leonard

Kayette Obrenski

Connie Pickard

Tricia Ray

Gary Wittenberg



CUT TO THE CHASE

We all know that our state and national economies are in for serious challenges ahead and budget cuts for CCPS have already begun. School locational budgets will be trimmed, allocations will be reduced, and some positions will be split. We haven't felt the impact of these cuts and reductions yet, but we have already seen the splitting of data entry positions at schools with fewer than 550 students.

CCPS has also decided not to renew an MOU with CCEA that extended days for some elementary schools to 8 hours. Next year, only those schools that are required by law to be extended will be extended (PCR & VOE). School locational budgets will be reduced by 10% and ESE allocations may be reduced.

These cuts are management's rights, but due to a very positive relationship with our School Board and a good working relationship with the district, CCEA was able to help reverse a decision that was made to reduce Media Specialist positions to .5 at seven of our smallest elementary schools. This was a major victory, but it would be naïve to think this issue won't come back.

The district's approach to cost-cutting starts with salary since that is the largest expense. CCEA's position is that any cuts that have to be made should be made as far away from students as possible. It seems obvious to us that the first place to look would be administrative positions at MLK.

According to the Florida Department of Education, there were 3,468 employees classified as "instructional staff" and 256 classified as "administrative staff" in the 2018-19 school year. Administrative staff equaled 7.38% of instructional staff. Standing alone, this means very little. However, when we look back to 2014-15, we see that the percentage was 6.87% with only 229 admin and 3,333 instructional. Compared to student enrollment, admin went up from .478% in 2014-15 to .540% in 2018-19 while instructional staff went down from 7.37% in 2014-15 to 7.31% in 2018-19.

Looking at our own history is important, but we also have to compare ourselves with similar sized counties. Of the nine counties within 25% of our size, Collier ranks third highest administrative percentage each year back to 2014-15.

It seems clear that our administrative staff grew more over the past five years than instructional staff and that CCPS maintains a higher percentage of administrative staff than most of our counterparts across the state. There is clearly room to cut in this area, but it won't get us where we need to be, as there simply aren't enough administrative positions to make a significant difference to our budget.

CCEA would like to be proactive this year as the district scours places to cut the budget. We would like your ideas

and suggestions so that we can respond proactively. CCEA is forming a committee to work on this issue throughout the year. Please email jonathan.tuttle@floridaea.org with your suggestions and let him know if you would like to be considered for placement on this committee.

Our thanks to all our members who communicate with us to help guide our work and who support us through their membership. Your CCEA staff is there for you every day of the year and your membership makes that possible. Our collective voice gets stronger with each member who joins!

Jonathan Tuttle, Executive Director

CERTIFICATION EXTENSION

The Commissioner of Education last week issued a new Emergency Order 2020-02 which includes several key provisions that FEA members & leadership have been advocating for. Most critical are the following:

- All Temporary and Professional certificates that would have expired June 30, 2020 are extended to December 31, 2020 to allow teachers to complete certification courses and tests.
- Teachers may be placed out of field for intensive reading instruction through December 31, 2020 to allow teachers to complete their certification or endorsement. School districts have also been granted an extension of their Reading Plan submissions, which will allow our locals to advise districts of other models for delivering intensive reading that do not require so many elementary reading teachers.
- Districts have been granted flexibility for meeting deadlines for completing IEP/EPs and ELL student assessments and other documentation.
- In addition to those provisions, this order reaffirms that the requirement for annual teacher evaluations has been suspended.

Although the DOE did not go as far as we wanted to extend the waivers through the end of the school year, this is a significant improvement over the previous one month extension. This would not have happened without FEA members' activism across the state. Victories like this are a result of members' collective action that benefit ALL teachers! If you haven't joined CCEA yet, this is another example of why you should join CCEA and how we are stronger together!

ASSOCIATION SUMMER HOURS

Our business hours will remain the same as the regular school year this summer

** Office hours will be by appointment **

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

As always, Jonathan and Lyle are available via cell phone or email 7 days a week

(239) 269-4068 (Jonathan's cell)

(239) 249-0591 (Lyle's cell)

(239) 592-7773 (Association Office)

EARN \$50

For Each New* CCEA Member You Recruit

(*Not previously enrolled in CCEA)

Enrollment Forms can be downloaded at

www.ccea-ocap.com

(Under the Membership Tab)

VOTE BY MAIL!

Florida is one of a handful of states that do not require a reason to request an "absentee ballot." Even in normal times, it seems like a good idea to request that a ballot be mailed to you. Please make sure your voice is heard and don't run the risk of not being able to vote on Election Day! Contact your local elections office and request a mail-in ballot today!

Collier County Supervisor of Elections

3750 Enterprise Ave

239-252-8683

Vote by mail: www.colliervotes.com

Lee County Office of Elections

2480 Thompson St, Ste 3, Ft Myers

239-533-8683

Vote by mail: www.lee.vote

Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections

6868 San Casa Drive, Ste 8

Englewood

941-833-5400

Vote by mail: www.charlottevotes.com

Hendry County Supervisor of Elections

P.O. Box 174

Labelle 33975

2020 CCEA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

This year's winners will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship during a Zoom Meeting scheduled for Wed., May 20th.

Congratulations to these 7 CCEA scholarship recipients!

Ella Pflommer	BCH
Taylor Caramigg	GCH
Jordann Mouton	GGH
Gisselle Hernandez	IHS
Olivia Ponton	NHS
Yasmin Lountchenko	PRH
Joey Stover	First Baptist

THANK YOU CCEA Members

One year's free membership as a Thank You from the "Woody" Woodruff Real Estate Team

Collier County traditional public schools are excellent! The "Woody" Woodruff Real Estate Team would like to provide to all CCEA Members an amount equal to one year's dues at the closing of any home purchased or sold in Collier or Lee County using the Woodruff Team.

The funds will be granted upon membership being certified by the organization's office.

Richard "Woody" Woodruff

239-290-8566 / rjwoodruff@embarqmail.com

Eric "Woody" Woodruff

239-287-8123 / ericwoodruff@embarqmail.com

The Pelican Post is the official publication of the **Collier County Education Association** at 6710 Lone Oak Blvd., Naples, FL, 34109

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