



THE PELICAN POST

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

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! I hope you were able to find some time to rest and relax this summer. As I was sitting in a training recently, I realized many of our colleagues are not utilizing the state statutes and our contract to ensure the safety of our working conditions that determine the learning environment of our students. First I heard repeatedly of students who disrupt the learning environment not being addressed. If you are experiencing that—state law provides a remedy.

Florida Statute states, “(4) A teacher may remove from class a student whose behavior the teacher determines interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn. Each district school board, each district school superintendent, and each school principal shall support the authority of teachers to remove disobedient, violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students from the classroom.” 1003.32 Please utilize this state statute (you need to document-contact the office for more information).

Furthermore, I also heard about teacher concerns not being addressed. Our contract provides for a Faculty Advisory Council—that is our voice and the first step in addressing teacher concerns—please use it. If you feel your FAC is not working let us know; we can’t address this problem if we are not aware of it. We have two staff members who can do FAC training at your school. Also, please note that in order to be proactive, CCEA meets regularly with HR to address concerns, so we need to know about them.

Since the last newsletter you received, your union leaders have been working over the summer to strengthen CCEA. Seven members (Annette Hall, Lisa Hicks, Jeannette Mouton, Ken Mouton, Quinetta Ryal, Hannah Stoneman, and Stephen Sullivan) attended FEA’s Summer Academy and gained the skills necessary to organize ourselves to affect the change we want to see in public education. Your First Vice President, Annette Hall, attended AFT Teach in Washington, D.C., and met with staff from two of our locally elected senators (check out our facebook page if you have not already). I will have attended (I am writing this at the end of July) NEA’s Leaders for Just Schools the first week of August and I can’t wait to bring back what I learn in that training.

Bargaining is ongoing; an update is included in this newsletter. I ended May’s column asking you—what role do you want to play in improving our profession? If you haven’t arrived at an answer, a good first step is writing your elected officials and advocating for public education as well as sharing your story with your friends and neighbors. I look forward to seeing you at a future event and engaging in that dialogue.

In Unity, Lisa

BARGAINING UPDATE

The CCEA Bargaining Team has met with the district 10 times since last spring and we still have more to go. 70 proposals have been discussed with about 50 of them already agreed to in principle leaving about 20 proposals left to review and negotiate. Hopefully negotiations will continue to be productive and we will be able to bring you a tentative agreement for your review in the not too distant future.

As always, CCEA’s major concerns revolve around time and money and, as usual, these are the two most difficult items to negotiate as CCEA always wants more for you than what the district believes they are able to provide. Your team of CCEA volunteers is committed to improving our Collective Bargaining Agreement with the School Board to the very best of its ability and will continue to work on your behalf for as long as it takes.

Jonathan Tuttle
CCEA Executive Director

LEGISLATIVE LOW DOWN

The 2019 Legislative Session was better for public education than the previous year, but with such a low bar, it’s hard to imagine it being worse. We saw a little more money, no state changes to benefits, and no further anti-union measures being passed. Unfortunately, the state still fell short of the financial commitment that is needed to bring Florida up to the national average, choosing instead to funnel more dollars into vouchers and charters.

The Base Student Allocation (BSA) was increased by \$75 (1.79%) – a significant improvement over the shameful \$0.47 that was funded last year. The BSA is significant as this is where districts have flexibility to decide how to spend the funds (i.e. teacher salary). Total funding increased by \$242.60 per student (3.27%) but again, the lion’s share of that amount is designated by the state for specific purposes called categoricals.

Two categoricals of particular interest to us are the Teachers Classroom Supply Assistance Program which continues at \$54,000,000 (\$900,000 for Collier) and the School Recognition Program allocation which also continues at \$134,600,000 (\$3,000,000 for Collier). While this money does flow into the hands of most of our members, CCEA would much prefer that these categoricals be abolished so we could put that \$4 million into salary for ALL.

A new categorical this year is the revamped “Best and Brightest” program funded at \$284,500,000 (\$5,000,000 for Collier). You can forget everything you knew about the old horrible program because this new horrible program is completely changed and is composed of 3 different components:

(Cont. on Pg. 3)

FAC: Communicate Early!

What do you do at your school if there are problems with procedures that teachers see but administration does not? Are there problems with morale at your school over issues that can be fixed if only they were addressed? Do you have ideas that would make your school a better, more efficient place to work but don't know how to get them started? Are some faculty members too intimidated to take concerns or suggestions to the administration?

These questions led to the creation of a provision in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that provides a safe and contractual vehicle to address all of these. The Faculty Advisory Council (3.11 in the CBA) was created as a means to address and remedy concerns at the school level. Through a series of discussions with the district, it is agreed that every school should have a fully functioning FAC that addresses issues at the school level as the first and best step.

All schools should have a FAC meeting with administration as early into the school year as possible to help clarify hopes and expectations for the upcoming year (this is most important if you have a new principal!). CCEA staff is more than happy to assist in any way we can whether it be a conducting a training session with your FAC and admin, help with writing agendas, or sharing template ideas for your minutes. Here are some tips you might want to utilize as you establish/re-start the FAC at your school:

- Approach your work as a FAC representative as a positive. You are doing noble work! After all, what could be more noble than volunteering your time and energy for the express purpose of improving the working and learning conditions at your school? You are to be commended for your willingness to serve!
- You do not walk into a FAC meeting as an individual and you should have no fear of recrimination. You are there to represent your colleagues to help make your school community better for all.
- After electing a rep from each team/department and a non-instructional employee, be sure to elect a Chair and a Secretary at your first meeting (without admin).
- The FAC meets alone to discuss the agenda before meeting with the principal.
- FAC agenda items do NOT have to be contractual issues. As issues are reviewed as possible agenda items, FAC Representatives should ask themselves if the positive resolution of a particular issue will improve the working/learning conditions at your school. If so, include it. If not, leave it off the agenda.
- The entire FAC meets with the principal/building administrators (not just the Chair and not via email).
- The secretary should project the minutes as they are being recorded so the whole group can "sign off" on them after each issue.
- The minutes should be distributed as soon as possible to the entire staff.
- Even though the FAC is in the CCEA CBA, it is NOT a CCEA "thing." Your school's CCEA Building Rep may or may not be a member of the FAC. In our view, it's probably best, however, that your FAC Chair not be the rep as there may be instances where the FAC is ineffective and an issue might have to go through the CCEA Building Rep to CCEA for further action.

If your FAC is already running smoothly, please see your CCEA Building Rep for a list of important FAC agenda items that should be addressed early in the year.

Jonathan Tuttle
CCEA Executive Director

Good Bye CTEM – Hello FTEM

The Focused Teacher Evaluation Model (FTEM) was piloted at 6 schools last year and is coming to all schools this year. This is a good thing:

- Reduces total number of elements from 60 to 23 (41 to 17 in standards based instruction elements)
- Keeps only the highest score for each rated element (NOT a growth model – keep an eye on this next year!)
- Innovating requires only 90% of students exhibiting the desired effect of the element verses 100% on the legacy model (CTEM)
- Still only 2 required elements for Deliberate Practice (CCEA & CCPS negotiated this down from the Marzano goal of 17 – this is huge – inform your members & non-members)
- Deliberate Practice IS a growth model. Whatever elements you choose or are chosen for you at the beginning of the year, make sure you rate yourself low so improvement can be shown by the end of the year (scoring calculation for DP has been included in this year's contract).

Unlike many "pilots" we have experienced in the past, the FTEM pilot last year was truly a pilot. CCEA kept a close eye on the 6 schools and was in close communication with the district throughout the year. The few bugs in the system should have been addressed and corrected by now.

The 6 schools which piloted the FTEM system last year saw an average increase in their Instructional Practice scores of 2.02 points. Only one of the schools saw its average score decrease (by 1.68) while another increased its average score by 8.29 points.

State statute requires that each Florida school district have a research-based evaluation system in place with at least 33% of the final evaluation score based on student growth. Like it or not, this is the hand we have been dealt. Given these parameters, we feel FTEM is a positive move forward from the old CTEM system.

Jonathan Tuttle
CCEA Executive Director

HELP TIGER ROAR!



Thank you so much for electing me to serve as your Collier TIGER Chairperson! For the uninitiated, Collier TIGER is CCEA's Political Action Committee and is an acronym for *Together In Government and Education Reform*. I am looking forward to a year of hearing TIGER Roar!!! I am so excited to work as a team to fulfill the mission of TIGER as stated in our bylaws – *“to support and strengthen the commitment of the citizens and government of Collier County and the State of Florida to excellence in public education at all levels”*. TIGER seeks to increase member involvement in government and political action, to educate and inform members on public education issues and office holders' voting records, and to support public education friendly candidates, among other initiatives. I am thrilled that TIGER has a committed TIGER Executive Committee in place. Additionally, we are seeking 3 representatives from each district to join our Board. And we need to grow our membership; please consider joining us!

Collier TIGER is nonpartisan and is not affiliated with any political party. We welcome everybody- Republicans, Democrats, Independents, NPAs. Our commonality is more important than our differences as we seek to support the best candidates, policies, and legislation that support excellence in public education. And we seek to call out legislation that erodes the public education system, along with those legislators that vote for such harmful legislation. At one of our recent Roundtable discussions, I was delighted to hear Jen Mitchell express her dismay with her own party when it comes to public education legislation, *“As a lifelong Republican, I am very concerned about the lack of support for public education by our leaders in Tallahassee. Their focus has clearly been on choice for the past several years, at the expense of the choices that already exist, in my opinion.”*

Bravo to Ms. Mitchell for speaking truth to power and for not being afraid to criticize one's own party! (TIGER proudly endorsed her when she ran for School Board.) She went on to say, *“The quality of education in any community deeply impacts us all, whether we have school age children or not, whether we are Republican or Democrat...from our property tax bill, to our home values, to the quality of our workforce. Investing in public education is an investment in our future... and as cliché as that may sound, it is fundamentally true. Supporting public education should NEVER be a political issue!”*

TIGER couldn't agree more! But we do need to grow our membership in order to achieve our goals for the upcoming year and beyond. Please support TIGER's mission by becoming a member, attending our Roundtables, special events, and Board meetings. We can't sign you up for TIGER at school (\$20 per year), but you can talk with your CCEA Building Rep about it or contact the CCEA Office for more information.

We need you to awaken the tiger and let our teachers' voices be heard throughout our county and state! Tallahassee – get ready to hear Collier TIGER roar!

Rosanne Mello
TIGER Chair

(Cont. from Pg. 1)

1. Recruitment: This will be a one-time bonus of up to \$4,000. The award is for newly hired K-12 classroom teacher who is a “content expert” in mathematics, science, computer science, reading or civics.” Neither the term “newly-hired” nor “content expert” are defined by law. Both will be determined by the FLDOE.

2. Retention: K-12 classroom instructors who meet the following criteria are eligible:

Rated Highly Effective (\$2,500 bonus) or Effective (\$1,000 bonus)

Taught in the same school for two consecutive years (including the year the award is made)

Taught in a school that “improved an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior three years.”

3. Recognition: The Recognition bonus is to be paid out with whatever funds are remaining after the recruitment and retention bonuses have been allocated. All K-12 “Instructional Personnel”; effective and highly effective, “selected by principal.... based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the district school board....” are eligible.

We are waiting for the FLDOE to define “newly hired” and “content expert,” but there is work to do in the meantime. As you recall, the previous Best & Brightest program did not apply to all instructional personnel in our unit and CCEA worked feverishly to secure equivalent bonuses for all. The phrase “selected by principal” is troubling for obvious reasons (it is doubtful that many principals want this responsibility either) and CCEA will work to see that the recognition money gets spread as wide as possible.

School safety was a major issue during this Legislative Session as well. The most controversial aspect of the school safety bill was the decision to allow classroom teachers to volunteer to be trained as guardians (i.e. arming teachers). This is not an issue in Collier as the decision has been made not to change what is in place.

Even though this session wasn't as bad as it could have been, we ought to expect more from our elected officials. We have a fabulous School Board that is doing everything in its power to support our public education system here in Collier. However, it is clear that we must do more to elect pro-public education legislators in Tallahassee as they are the ones who control the purse strings and continue to micromanage what we do in the classroom to the detriment of our students. If WE don't get active to defend public education, who will?

Jonathan Tuttle
CCEA Executive Director



IMPORTANT FYI

- PLCs may NOT be held during planning
- Mentor/mentee meetings after school are NOT mandatory
- If called to the office, ask if it could be disciplinary. If so, tell them you want your CCEA Rep.
- NO training after contract hours is mandatory
- HS teachers may have to attend a monthly faculty meeting that lasts ½ hour past contract time

