

UNITER

A Publication of the United School Employees of Pasco

December 1st, 2017

From the President

Holiday Greetings!

As we head into the final days of Semester One, I want to say thank you to all of our hard working members who are daily trying to grow our organization. We have worked hard with the District to accomplish a lot this year, including working through DA school issues, compensation for shelter volunteers and make-up schedules for school closings during Hurricane Irma, just to name a few. Our goal of recruitment and retention rings louder today, as I just discovered that a Bill to decertify unions has already been filed for this year. Now, more than ever, we need to be having conversations with potential members to explain to them the power of a collective voice. Individually, we are a cry in the dark, but COLLECTIVELY we are a voice to be reckoned with. We need to make a stand to Legislators that we are here to stay! Explain to those who raise the loudest objections to what we are doing that they, too, can and need to be part of the solution. Empower them with knowledge so they can speak out with authority. Guide them so they can be effective. Join WITH them, so WE ALL STAND TOGETHER AS ONE VOICE! I am excited to tell you that 40 brand new Building Reps attended our recent Leadership Training, and will be a part of our activists as we seek to educate fellow employees, family and our community on our concerns to this attack on PUBLIC EDUCATION while seemingly turning a blind eye to Charter Schools and their many issues.

I can tell you that our office staff is working very hard each day to help each of you be the best you can be in your workplace as we strive to give our students the best opportunity for a successful education. We continue to work with the District to finalize our contract for this year, hopefully before the Holiday break.

As you enjoy time off with family and friends, relax and rejuvenate. During this time, we at USEP want to wish you and your families a Happy Holiday and a prosperous New Year.

See you next year



Don Peace

Instructional Bargaining Update

As we approach the Winter Break, our Instructional Bargaining team continues to engage the District in negotiations over two significant issues: Differentiated Accountability schools and Economics.

Unfortunately, due to delays in finalizing school grades and approval of District school improvement plans, our Differentiated Accountability MOU was not settled prior to the start of the school year. The state identified two schools under Differentiated Accountability (DA) for targeted monitoring and support, and the District's proposed improvement plans include provisions for required professional development focused on student growth. In order to make these required trainings work without unnecessary or excessive disruption to instructional time, USEP is seeking to allow the teachers at these schools the ability to determine as a staff how best to receive training. USEP is also seeking compensation for the additional professional development.

In terms of Economics, it is apparent that the primary sticking point has resulted from the state's statutory commitment to direct performance pay in the form of bonuses to classroom teachers. HB 7069, signed into law just this year, includes an expansion of the Best and Brightest program and awards \$1200 to Highly Effective and up to \$800 to Effective classroom teachers. By statute, non-classroom teachers are NOT eligible for direct performance bonuses from the state. This includes School Counselors, Behavior Specialists, Instructional Coaches and other non-classroom instructional staff.

The current offer from the District provides a total of \$1,085,947 in additional compensation to the Instructional bargaining unit, with more than half of these funds disbursed as one-time bonuses to non-classroom instructional staff who are excluded from the state's performance bonus program but otherwise meet eligibility requirements in statute. Their proposal also seeks to phase out the existing pay cycle

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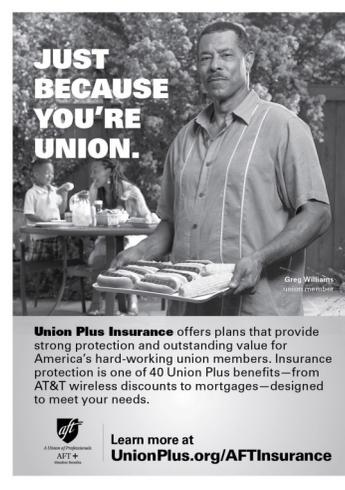
30th Anniversary of the SRP Unionizing

This fall, 30 years ago, School Related Personnel, "long desiring a voice in determining their working conditions, worked zealously with state and national union organizers and local PCTA leaders to elect PCTA (now USEP) as their bargaining unit."

The effort to organize the SRP actually began in October of 1986 when members of PCTA voted to conduct a 'Show of Interest' vote. Following the successful outcome of that vote, Tom Moran, AFT National Rep, spearheaded the campaign, assisted by Clarence Frost of AFL-CIO and LaVaunne Miller of PCTA. On September 3rd, 1987, the SRP voted to make PCTA their bargaining agent.

On November 17th of the same year, the first SRP Contract was ratified. The first contract included the right to grieve violations or misapplications of the contract, a 7.5% pay increase, language defining seniority, protections against forced overtime,

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Inst. Bargaining Update

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for teachers, which pays out summer checks together in June. Current employees would be given choice, but all new hires would be placed on a year-round 26-pay cycle.

With limited funds available this year, USEP has sought to place any recurring dollars in true salary improvements and has proposed extending the equivalent of the state's classroom teacher bonuses to non-classroom instructional staff using ONLY non-recurring dollars. Prior to responding to the District's offer, USEP surveyed instructional bargaining unit members and found that teachers overwhelmingly supported this position. Ninety-three percent of the survey respondents urged USEP to continue advocating for recurring dollars to be directed to permanent salary improvements. Our most recent proposal, passed on November 15th, totaled \$3.6 million (\$3,025,560 in recurring dollars for salary improvements, plus \$585,183 in non-recurring dollars for non-classroom teacher bonuses). We await the District's response.

It is important to note that the District has already agreed to increase the Board's contribution to health insurance by \$142.02 per eligible employee, bringing the value of the Board's contribution to \$6785.00. They have further agreed to cover the increase in required contributions to the Florida Retirement System.

USEP remains optimistic that a settlement can be reached in the very near future, and we look forward to providing you with the final details of a tentative agreement and getting the ratification process underway.

Our Instructional Bargaining Team members have demonstrated a deep commitment to representing all of the Instructional Bargaining Unit during this year's negotiation cycle. We thank them for their time, energy and thoughtful contributions to the process.

SRP Bargaining Update

The SRP Bargaining teams met just before the Thanksgiving break and both the District and USEP teams passed economic proposals to each other. As has been stated many times this Fall, the state legislature passed a massive education reform law known as House Bill (HB) 7069 which took a significant amount of money typically sent to all districts and created a state-run "bonus" program for teachers. This took most of the money available to collectively bargain and left our district with only the money they were able to roll over from operations during the 2016-2017 school year. This amounted to approx. \$3.3-\$3.5 million.

Therefore, here is the most recent financial proposals made by each party. The teams are scheduled to return to the bargaining table again on Monday, December 4th.

** **SRP Unit**.....the District passed its first economic proposal and the total was \$1,234,000 or 1.75% of payroll. USEP then countered with an offer of \$1,716, 228 of recurring dollars to increase all SRP permanent salaries (est. @2.45%). In addition, the District and Union are holding meetings with an established *Compensation Committee* seeking to transition from over 30 salary schedules to a more manageable 17 salary ranges. This transition will, in many cases, increase the pay levels in these ranges and enable all SRP salary levels to increase more rapidly than the current salary schedules allow.

Many thanks to our bargaining team members who have contributed many hours of their time for the benefit of all employees.

USEP Strategic Planning

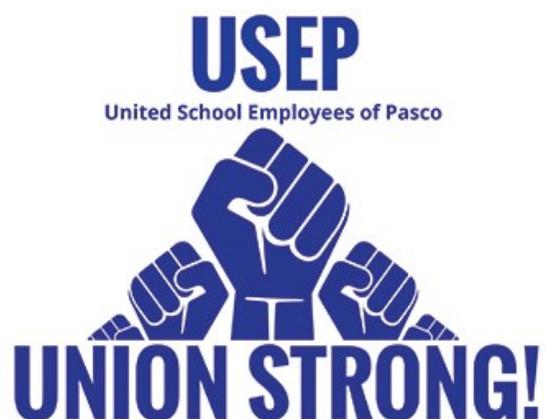
Since the summer, the Executive Board has been very engaged in training on Carver's Policy Governance and has begun to re-visit the strategic initiatives developed during the Futures Process in 2015-2016. Carver's Policy Governance is a process which provides substance to the work of non-profit boards. The Futures Process has been ongoing since 2006 in USEP and most recently in December of 2015. The purpose of Futures is to design and implement processes to gain maximum input and participation from USEP executive board members, building representatives, members, potential members, and staff in order to define USEP's desired future and make recommendations to the governing bodies for appropriate action.

The Executive Board of USEP determined that in order to move the organization forward and meet the challenges we face in public education at the local, state and national levels and the impact these challenges have on our members, USEP must develop a collective sense of purpose and direction. To develop a collective sense of purpose and direction requires us to look further into the future, broaden our viewpoints, and increase participation of all stakeholders in the decision making process. USEP must be a living, thriving organization that continuously improves its capacity to change and adapt.

The following are some of the topics which will be examined during this process:

- To develop processes to look at systems, structures, programs and services already in place in order to validate them as essential and to be kept, change them to become more effective, or eliminate them.
- To develop new systems, structures, programs and services to meet needs, and institutionalize strategic planning and assessment.
- To advocate recommended changes throughout the process by establishing short term goals and benchmarks of success toward USEP's progress.
- To create and commit to a shared purpose and direction for USEP among leadership.
- To collectively define the role of USEP in relationship to the community, district, worksites, as well as our members and constituency groups.

The Futures Committee met in early November this year and will meet again in early spring. Work has begun on several structures and systems to begin to align USEP with its Future reality and the completion of the strategic initiatives over the next 18 to 24 months.



Pasco Legislative Delegation

Remarks given by USEP President Don Peace to the Pasco Legislative Delegation at Wesley Chapel High School.

Good morning Legislators. My name is Don Peace and I am President of the United School Employees of Pasco. Thank you for taking the time to hear our concerns. Today, I would like to address some of the concerns of Education.

This needs to be a year in which the Florida Legislature takes a good look at **Public Education** and returns our employees to Professional status. **Educators**, like Doctors, Lawyers, Police and Firefighters, **are highly trained and skilled masters of their craft**. They need to be treated accordingly. However, due to recent legislation, the culture of Public Education is no longer about delivering well rounded students with **the art and craft of teaching**, but has become a game of **deriving raw data** through testing in order to justify a job.

Tallahassee needs to treat us as professionals and reward us with worthy salaries instead of bonus pay plans meant to divide our ranks. It is USEP's position that every teacher and School Related Personnel play an important role in the development of the student, and all should be considered for reward. Bonus pay is **not** a reward. Bonus pay is taxed at a higher percentage rate, does **nothing** to increase an individuals' base salary or retirement pay, and **circumvents collective bargaining**. Instead of giving us pretend rewards, **please send our Districts recurring money** that we can negotiate to benefit ALL employees, not just a select few.

How do we intend to attract the best and brightest into the field of education, when we don't put recurring money into salaries for teachers **when the average teacher pay in Florida is well below the national average?**

We ask that you see to it that **Public Education funding is prioritized** to promote a quality education in Florida schools, while not putting the majority of the burden on the Local Required Effort as proposed in the Governor's budget.

Charter School accountability is another concern. There is a **terrible disparity** between the over 3500 Public schools serving 2.7 million students, and the 650+ Charter Schools serving just over 280,000 students. While there are some quality schools in operation, and Pasco has some thriving schools, thirty to forty per cent of Charters fail within the first 3-5 years. Fiscal irresponsibility and cronyism are the two biggest reasons. Since Charter Schools are utilizing **Public Tax Dollars** to operate, **they need to be held to the same high standards**

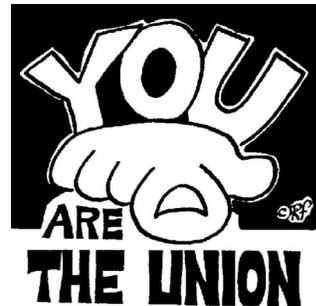
that our Public schools adhere to, especially in the area of finance. The Legislature is charged with providing for this oversight of Public Funds.

Using standardized tests, hiring certified teachers and administrators and being graded as a school entity **must also be addressed**, in order to be brought up to the standards expected of those using Public funds.

It must also be noted that public schools in Pasco served as shelters during Irma and that before any expectation of compensation was suggested many of our district's employees were already volunteering and preparing to assist the community in a time of need. I don't believe any Charter Schools in Pasco opened as shelters.

We cannot justify supporting two standards for education in Florida. Please address this issue during the Legislative session.

Again, thank you for your time, and I look forward to seeing you next week in Tallahassee.



SRP 30th Anniversary

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retroactive pay for underpayment of wages, among other provisions.

As we face a time where the Legislature is actively working against the rights of public school employees to collectively bargain, it is important to remember that there was a time when employees in Pasco County Schools did not have contractual rights protected by a collective bargaining agreement. On this 30th anniversary of the SRP unit, we celebrate the dedication and hard work of all SRP members, past and present.

UNITED SCHOOL EMPLOYEES OF PASCO

Dec 2017 UNITER

Employee ID	PRINT NAME (LAST NAME, FIRST NAME)	WORKSITE	JOBTITLE
ADDRESS		CITY	STATE ZIP CODE
()	PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESS (not your @pasco.k12.fl.us e-mail)		For USEP Use Only Sent to District: ____/____/____ Entered in DB: ____/____/____
HOME PHONE			
USEP CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION <input type="checkbox"/> PAYROLL DEDUCTION I authorize the District School Board of Pasco County to deduct membership dues from my paycheck to be remitted to the United School Employees of Pasco. I understand that I may terminate these deductions at any time by officially notifying USEP in writing and following revocation process. Signature _____ Date _____ <input type="checkbox"/> CASH PAY			
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Recruiting Member (please print)

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