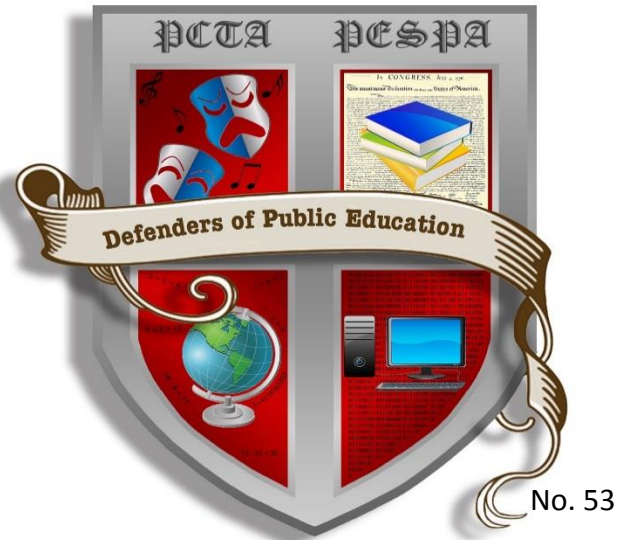


The President's

Solidarity Report



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Professional Educators for School Board!

Everything about our profession is political. Politicians determine how much is available for us to negotiate over salaries and benefits. Lawmakers determined that educators are undeserving of any type of job security when they passed SB 736. Our pensions are available until they see otherwise and of course they saw fit to tax us 3% because they can. Curriculum, classroom time, evaluations and testing are all determined by politicians who feel they are experts in education simply because they went to school as kids. Lucky for us, they don't claim expertise in the medical profession simply because they visited a doctor or a hospital.

It seems that only in education, does Tallahassee feel the need to entrench themselves. We stand in their way toward privatization so they attempt to decertify us, but we only get stronger. Oddly enough, the money being thrown at School Board races has increased exponentially since the charter school/voucher movement started gaining traction. It is important that we pay close attention to where this money comes from.

School Boards are the only filter education employees have to offset some of the ills brought down from Tallahassee. Who sits on the Board matters.

As our Union fights to defend public education, we still need to do what we can to make working conditions acceptable for our educators; after all, our working conditions are our students learning conditions. That is why we encourage and endorse teachers to run for the School Board. Recent experience in the classroom is key because only a classroom teacher sees and feels the impact of what is happening to our students since Tallahassee began setting public schools up for failure to justify steering tax dollars toward private charters. The PCTA Political Action Committee appreciates that all the candidates running for the Board are good and caring people who want to make a difference but we are in a war to save public education and good and caring are not enough anymore. We need fighters who know first-hand how every mandate has impacted their colleagues and have seen the changes in student behavior instigated by mandates that were intended to make students feel inadequate and school, a place they do not want to be.

So not everyone will agree with the endorsements of our PAC but, we should all want our voice to be heard at the School Board level and beyond. To achieve this, we must vote as a block. Pinellas County Schools employs nearly 15,000 employees. Along with their families and friends, we can influence this race like we did two years ago when two union sisters won their elections.

Jeff Larsen and Carl Zimmermann were already endorsed by the West Central Florida Central Labor Council even before PCTA-PESPA endorsed them. Imagine how it would have looked to the other labor unions if we did not endorse our own and went against who the letter carriers, electricians, pipefitters, communications employees and all the other unions feel should be our champions? After all, we are not alone in Pinellas and educators are an important part of the working families coalition that is the Labor Movement. Lorena Grizzle and Nick Wright are solidly on all our issues and have been active PCTA members for years.

We have our candidates and now it is up to us to support them. If the person you wanted to see run is not among our endorsements, I am sorry, but now is the time to say to yourself,

- What if we could influence the Board to re-examine District policies?
- What if we had Board Members who understood the climate of fear that exists because of annual contracts and how some administrators have used it against anyone who questions their decisions?
- What if we had a Board made up of folks that have suffered under the same system as us and are now in a position to do something about it?
- What if we had a Board that could install a transfer process that values the service educators have given to the District and places all existing employees before hiring new ones?
- What if we had a Board that believed that a teacher had a right to a fair and just appeal process for their evaluation?
- What if we had more than two School Board Members asking for a climate survey?

We can't force the District to give us everything we want in our contract but a change in District policy could cure an ailment just as well. So, the question we all need to ask ourselves is how badly do we want positive change and what are we willing to do to get it. I, for one, will not leave any of my fight in the gym. I will spend every last ounce of energy helping our endorsed candidates get seated on that School Board.

IS IT TIME TO BUY A HOME?



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For members of the Teacher's Union, **MAR-KEY** will gladly pay for a full Home Inspection or 1-Year Home Warranty (up to \$500 value.) at time of closing. **MAR-KEY** thanks you for all you do to educate and care for our children.

Services **MAR-KEY offers:**

- Buyer & Seller Residential Services
- Property Management: Rental management & Tenant search
- Community Association Management
- Commercial Real Estate Services
- Property Development

The Transfer Process

For years, PCTA has advocated for a transfer period that was consistent, fair and respectful to current employees. Year after year we have had to settle for one out of three. The transfer process has been consistently horrible every year. This year is no exception. Teachers calling to complain about what they perceive to be shabby treatment have been endless. That criticism is not on the people who lead and work the HR department of PCS, because the problem is within the system. They sincerely strive to place and assist the employees of Pinellas County Schools. You can't blame the driver of a car if the car is not operating correctly, the car may be in need of repair, or perhaps it's time for a new car.

Successful companies promote from within and offer transfer postings internally for employees. When a company announces a promotion or a job transfer, it tells other employees that there's opportunity for growth. It's a selling point for many organizations that want to recruit and retain talented employees. Internal applicants represent a "known commodity," relieving some of the risk of making a bad hiring decision. Until which time that there are no current employees vying for open positions, new hires should not be sought after. There will be plenty of opportunities to hire new blood to fill the positions left open by current employees who transfer. There is no reason

to save choice jobs for new hires when there are folks who have a proven record of service to the students of this District.

Principals have little training in best hiring practices. Too often, they allow subjectivity to enter into the equation and don't focus enough on objective factors. There is a real risk that decisions are being made based on who's comfortable with whom rather than who's going to do the best job. There is also the possibility of other influences, frowned upon by any reputable company, affecting decision making. Age, race, disability, pregnancy, contract status and union membership are examples of illegal factors used to deny an employment opportunity. The one constant objective reason that most of us can agree on is seniority. Hiring the best qualified, most senior candidate is a fair and respected hiring practice and removes subjectivity from the decision process.

The District would argue that in the long term, this would leave some schools with an overwhelming majority of senior teachers, and they would be right. In the interest of what is best for schools, PCTA would agree to a fair formula that respected seniority but allowed for an equal distribution of new, veteran, and senior teachers in every school. The creation of a fair transfer process is not rocket science and should be mutually beneficial. I know that HR gets as many complaints about the process as I field this time of year. I encourage you all to continue to contact HR and PCTA about your disappointment and in many cases, outrage, over the transfer process. The squeaky wheel does get the oil, eventually. It's our District, so let's do what we can to make it a great place to work by expressing our opinions and utilizing our votes!



**PCTA & PESPA Rep School of Instruction
will be held on Saturday, August 4, 2018 at
Banquet Masters, Clearwater, Florida.
Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and continuing until
4:00 p.m.**

**Mark your calendars now, trade day and
component point options available.**

**Important information to share for the
upcoming school year.**

Take Full Advantage of your HUMANA ONSITE TEAM



Humana Onsite Team

Office Hours: M—F from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



Janet Lang

Humana Patient Advocate

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- Explanation of benefits questions
- Review claims and billing inquires
- Assist with eligibility inquires
- In-network provider inquires
- Spending account inquires
- Humana Dental questions



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- Oversees the PCS Diabetes Care Program
- Liaison for the Tampa Bay Mobile Mammography Bus
- Resource for inpatient / outpatient coordination of care issues
- Promotes Humana's Clinical Care Programs: HumanaFirst Nurse Advice Line, Humana Beginnings, Personal Nurse, & Case Management
- Provides general Health and preventive screening information



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- Humana Go365 program questions
- Works closely with Pinellas County Schools employee wellness team on programs and initiatives
- Promotes and attends health screenings
- Promotes Humana's Health Coaching (Go365) Program
- Provides general health and preventive screening education

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