



CCEA

CITRUS COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

October 2021

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“CCEA represents both teachers and support staff.”



CCEA Leadership welcomed new Educators to Citrus Schools at the District's New Teacher Orientation.

Message from the President

Hello, my name is Victoria Smith, and I am the President of the Citrus County Education Association. I am also a Geometry Teacher at Citrus High School.

Citrus County Education Association (CCEA) represents both teachers and support staff. We actively advocate for the employees at the bargaining table, at the worksite when assistance is needed and at the state level lobbying for laws that protect your rights and securing salary dollars. We provide professional development, so your skills are always top notch. We want to support you and be there for you when you need us.

You can reach out to me anytime that you need me, but remember, I am also a classroom teacher so leave a message if I don't answer my phone, I will return it as soon as I am able to. Many worksites have an elected Worksite Leader. They too will be able to answer your questions and obtain any additional information you may need regarding membership or benefits that we offer through our National Unions.

My number is 352.442.1397 or email me at vjosephccea@gmail.com. I look forward to talking with you.

Yours in Unity,
Victoria Smith

Message from the Vice President

Hello Citrus Educators,

The challenges seem to be piling up this year. There are technological difficulties and transitions to manage, increased class sizes to make room for, and a great deal of uncertainty still surrounding Covid-19. I know that each of these challenges have affected me personally in my own classroom, and that it's difficult to maintain morale when we look back on all we seemed to have lost in this profession.

Just when I felt like giving up, I met my new students. Kids aren't the same as they were 20, 10 or even 5 years ago, that's true. But when I look around at my 7th graders, I still see that same curiosity, that same enthusiasm for life that first drew me into my career as a middle school science teacher. There is still good to nurture in our kids, and there is still purpose in what we do here. With that in mind, and with the support of my fellow educators at IMS, and in CCEA at large, I know that not only will we make it through this rough time, but we will see better days ahead. Together we will thrive, and together we can make the difference in our children's lives, and in our profession.

Wishing you the safest, most successful school year,

Christian Gallery



Your CCEA Bargaining Team:

Terri Cooke, Teacher (CHS)
 Samantha Churchwell, Teacher (LPS)
 Craig Fiscofer, System Support (TRC)
 Christian Gallery, Teacher (IMS)
 Michelle Houpt, Data Sec(LHS)
 Angie Poliseno, Clerk (CHS)
 Diana Sauls, Teacher (eSchool)
 Victoria Smith, Teacher (CHS)
 Linda Stiegler, Para-ESE (CREST)

Bargaining Sessions are live-streamed and recorded. All sessions may be viewed on the District's YouTube page.

CitrusSchools -
<https://www.youtube.com/user/CitrusSchools/videos>

Bargaining Update

CCEA and the District bargaining teams resumed negotiations for the 2021-22 contract year in April and have reviewed contract language for the instructional and support units over the course of six months.

Tentative Agreements Reached To Date:

- Improvements to Athletic Supplements
- Instructional Placement Schedule
- Ratification Language
- Contract Duration Language
- Improved Position Supplements - Critical Positions (School Psychologists & SLP)
- COVID sick leave reimbursement
- Differential pay for Support Covering Clinic
- Supplemental pay for Support Sub Coverage
- Access to Technology and Use of Personal Devices
- Support Language for Athletic Supplements

Items Still Under Discussion:

- Citrus eSchool Working Conditions
- \$1000 COVID Relief Payments
- Teachers Providing Sub Coverage
- Salary Improvements & Board Benefits

Copies of the current CCEA instructional and support contracts are available on the CCEA website (<http://myCCEA.net>), along with the tentative agreements which have already been reached for the current year. It is important to remember that tentative agreements go into effect AFTER they have been ratified by both the bargaining unit and the school board.

DID YOU KNOW? The FL state minimum wage increased by \$1.35 on September 30, 2021.

HOWEVER: Employees in the CCEA Classified Support Unit did not receive increases as a result of the minimum wage hike.

SO: Classified employees at the bottom of the pay scale saw their pay go from \$1.39/hr above minimum wage to \$.04/hr above minimum wage.

ALSO: In the first week of October, there were 34 posted vacancies in the Classified unit.

Member Benefits Corner



Explore ALL of your union benefits online:
<https://feaweb.org/member-center/member-benefits/>

Did you know?

You and your family members are eligible for free services through HCAM. These services include, counseling service, drug/alcohol rehab services, and more. www.unionsupport.org

Are you getting the most out of your benefits?

Members get discounts on all kinds of things, including, hotel, car rental, theme park tickets, flights, car insurance and more. Download the "My Deals" app and start saving today!



Get MyDeals



FEA NEWS

Florida's Teacher & Staff Shortage

Florida has a serious and growing teacher shortage. Districts had more than 4,000-advertised vacancies for classroom teachers in August 2018, up from 3,000 in 2017 and 2,400 in 2016. As of January 2020 —midway through the school year — more than 2,440 teaching positions remained unfilled across FL school districts — a 10% increase from January 2019.

With thousands of professional educators having left or leaving the job they love, Florida's schools are in desperate need of help.

Outside of COVID concerns, there are several reasons for the teacher and staff shortage:

- ❖ Pay, with Florida ranking 46th nationally for teacher salaries and education staff professionals are paid below the national poverty level
- ❖ Lack of support
- ❖ Lack of flexibility in instruction and the need to “teach to the test”
- ❖ Confusing evaluation standards
- ❖ Overcrowded classrooms
- ❖ Ever-increasing demands on educators' time

When the profession is attacked daily; when the contribution educators make to students and communities goes unrecognized; when fair and equitable salary increases are prohibited by state statute — it becomes difficult to attract and retain dedicated and qualified education professionals.

In fact, financial website WalletHub ranks the “Best and Worst States for Teachers” Florida comes in as one of worst states for teachers, ranking 47th.

Most concerning, this shortage robs our students of the opportunity to learn and puts their safety at risk. Districts across the state are dealing with the teacher shortages in classrooms by staffing large numbers of substitutes and permanent substitutes. Shortages among bus drivers, school counselors, school resource officers and other education staff professionals are a threat the safety and well-being of our students.

Public education advocates know that the Legislature can change the shortage situation. The FEA is advocating for several actions during the [2022 Legislative Session](#), including providing fair, competitive pay for teachers and staff, reducing standardized testing and removing the high-stakes associated with tests, and allowing qualified teachers to earn multi-year contracts rather than face the uncertainty of automatically terminating contracts. Learn more by visiting: <https://feaweb.org/issues-action/>

***At the end of August 2021, CCSD had 50 instructional vacancies and 27 classified support vacancies advertised.**

Florida Education Association Annual Delegate Assembly October 14-16, 2021

“More than a business meeting...”

This month, elected delegates from education locals across the state will gather in Orlando to conduct the business of our state association, FEA.

The Annual FEA DA is much more than just a business meeting. It is also a chance to connect with colleagues from around the state and discuss solutions to the issues that most directly impact educators and the students they serve. There are nearly a dozen caucus groups such as the Science Educators Caucus, the Young Educators Caucus, the Minority Affairs Caucus, the Women's Caucus, and many more. Membership in one (or more) of these caucuses is a great way for members to stay engaged throughout the year with colleagues from all over the state who share similar passions.

***CCEA is sending nine members – elected by our local last Spring– to be the voice for all Citrus County educators at this year's FEA DA.**



FEA's podcast 'Educating from the Heart' is a series dedicated to the topics and issues most relevant to the work of educators in FL's public schools. Add 'Educating from the Heart' to your playlist: <https://feaweb.org/educating-from-the-heart/>

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CCEA COMMITTEES

Government Relations

Government Relations is a committee dedicated to speaking with local school board members, state representatives and other elected officials on what members of CCEA feel about the issues facing education today. We also are dedicated to maintaining relations with other labor organizations through our local CLC, and educating our members on the positions our elected officials take on education issues through events like Town Halls. We are in great need of more members to further our efforts, and if you'd like to have an impact on how those in power perceive education, please reach out to us!

Community Outreach/FYRE

Community outreach/ FYRE is a committee that plans events in our community. Some of the events are the Inverness Christmas parade, the Strawberry and Manatee festivals, and the Halloween trunk or treat (put on by CCEA).

We are looking to grow this committee with dedicated people who are wanting to see the CCEA grow in our community.

Please contact us if you are interested in being a part of this committee.

Chair: Holly Baker email- bakerholly10@gmail.com

Co-chair: Shelby Holmberg email- catmom2@yahoo.com

Membership Committee

The Membership committee is dedicated to growing our membership. We work in conjunction with the Community Outreach/FYRE committees to plan fun events for our members and potential members. We also focus on strategies to engage members and focus on ways to improve our union offerings.

Chair: Kristin Hollingsworth Knoelle80@yahoo.com or 352-422-3391

Upcoming Events

October 23rd- CCEA Trunk or Treat

November 6th- Dragon Boat Race*

December 11th- Inverness Christmas Parade*

*If you are interested in joining CCEA's Dragon Boat team or would like to be involved our Christmas Parade entry, please email Holly Baker ASAP! Bakerholly10@gmail.com



Trunk or Treat – Volunteers Needed

After last year's spooktacular event, CCEA is doing it again! Don't miss out on this year's FUN! Email Kristin Hollingsworth (Knoelle80@yahoo.com) to volunteer.

We are looking for volunteers and/or donations for our Trunk or Treat!
This event will be held on Saturday, October 23rd from 530-7:00 pm at the Hollingsworth Residence in Lecanto.

What's needed:

- Trunks/ Candy Booths
- Members to run games
- Donations
 - Candy
 - Small Prizes
 - Pumpkins (all sizes)



Site Leader Meeting Dates

Site Leader Meetings that take place on ZOOM will meet at 630 pm. All other site meetings will take place at CREST at 430 pm. Please plan accordingly.

10/20- ZOOM	2/16- ZOOM
11/17	3/16
12/15- TBD	4/20- ZOOM
1/19	5/18

****Subject to change.**