

WCSP BULLETIN

MARCH 2021

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Hello Members,

I am recovering from my second Covid positive episode. I plan on returning to duty the first or second week in March. I am doing well and getting stronger every day. I am so excited to come back to work and back to serving our members. I have remained in contact with Michael, Lisa and Melinda. I have also been in touch with members and have helped as much as I could from home. My nurturing characteristics have compassed me in staying in touch. I want to have a relationship with my members, keeping them in the know and feeling the security of job safety and stability. We are here and have your back. The whole purpose of this newsletter is to be informative and pass on the information.

We do need your help. In the next section of the newsletter is an explanation of things going on in our legislature. I have already written letters to our Representatives and Senator Gainer. I will share with you what I explained to them. In my 32 years of employment with WCSB most rights and

upgrades, as well as substantial wages and raises, came from direct negotiations of our contract. It has been shared with me in the past that our contract is appreciated, being in place to help keep our whole establishment in an organized state instead of confusion about rights and due process. I am usually the receiver of emails or phone calls or even text from employees that have received an obstacle or issue from administration that they would of never expected to come up or happen to them. People that have never been warned or written up. When working with children unexpected things can happen or be misunderstood. The presence of the Union must be here for guidance and as a job safety net. Please take time to read this next section carefully. Then take time to step up and take an action. The simplest thing to do is for everyone to set a goal of recruiting at least 3 new members before the year is out to keep us alive and thriving.

I know you see teachers unions on the news with negative publicity but we know all organizations have good qualities and not so good. However, we know here in Walton County our union has not done negative things giving us a bad reputation. We have fought for wages, bonuses and hours as well as constantly examining job description updates (hard battle). When you need representation locally or legally the union is there. Our union went to work because we know we couldn't work remotely as ESPs. We didn't have layoffs or major cutbacks. The union always has an open eye on what's going on as well as members and building reps keeping their eyes open and reporting. Let me say Thank You for always being there for one another.

With Love and dedication,
Victoria Wilkerson
WCSP President

OFFICER AND DELEGATE NOMINATIONS

WCSP will be accepting nominations for President, Secretary-Treasurer and FEADA Delegates until 5:00 PM on March 22, 2021. You can find nomination forms on the website at www.waltoncsp.org. You can return completed nominations forms via email

to lisa.williams@floridaea.org or via courier to Carol Alessio, Election Chair, Freeport Transportation.



**WCSP
STRONG!**

Stay Positive

Work Hard

Make It Happen!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

SB 84

by Senator Ray Rodrigues is a retirement bill which will mandate that anyone hired after July 1, 2022 will be required to participate in the Florida Retirement Investment Fund. Meaning anyone hired after July 1, 2022 would not have the pension as an option. The pension would be closed. We can all imagine what this will do to the stability of the Florida Pension Fund, currently one of the strongest in the nation.

SB 1014/HB835

Requires Instructional and **Education Staff Professional** Locals to maintain **50%** membership on December 31st of each year in order to keep its status as the Bargaining Agent. If a Local doesn't maintain 50% density then it could be decertified. Once decertified, rights and benefits under contracts become null and void.

Requires all members to rejoin the union on August 1st of each year and re-sign every 2 years.

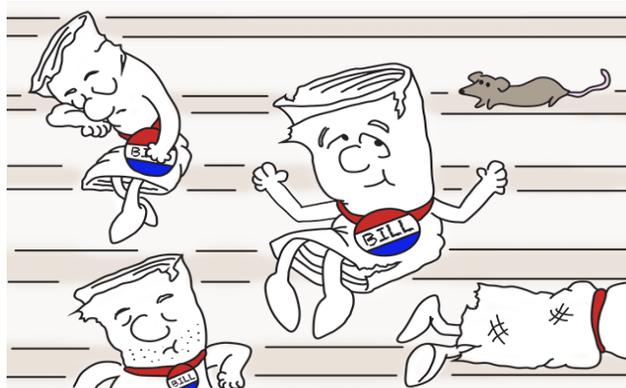
Requires the school district to verify with each member that they wish to remain a member.

These bills are specifically designed to kill our union.

SB 48

by Senator Manny Diaz, combines the voucher programs into two programs – an ESE voucher program and a non-ESE voucher program. It expands who can qualify for a voucher and expands the uses of the funds to include just about anything, private schooling, home schooling, tutoring, and even saving the funds to use for an individual's higher education. ***These are our public tax dollars that should be spent on public schools, children and employees, instead of private businesses and purposes.***

Union—an organization of workers formed to protect the rights and interests of its members in respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions.



UNION

People

Organizing

With

Effective

Results

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

“Each One Reach One” has never been more important than it is now. WCSP is currently at 27% membership. We need you, as a valued member who appreciates and depends upon your contract and retirement benefits, to reach out to potential members and share the importance of joining today! If you need some materials, please reach out to Victoria, Michael or Lisa (see page 4) and they can get you some flyers and booklet sized contracts to use in your organizing efforts. If a potential member is holding the contract in their hand, it may help them understand what they could lose if WCSP doesn't reach 50% membership. WCSP feels very certain that if the legislation doesn't pass this legislative season, it will be back again and again until it does become law. Please also share with them that SB 84 will cause instability in the Florida Pension Fund, as clearly that should resonate with everyone! Finally WCSP's contract is very good in comparison to surrounding counties. In some counties support staff have no benefits such as paid time off, sick leave, retirement or medical/dental coverage. The wages are lower too. This is serious.

Your contract is worth fighting to keep!

Without a union, workers are “at will” employees subject to no job security, work protections or rights.

WALTON COUNTY SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

1610 Beck Avenue
Panama City, FL 32405
850-763-3416

Victoria Wilkerson, President
tonyandvicki1126@gmail.com

Michael Petty, Executive Director
michael.petty@floridaea.org

Lisa Williams, Office Manager
lisa.williams@floridaea.org

850-763-3416

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Membership Meeting Link/Call Information

<https://zoom.us/j/91728511834?pwd=Q2E0ek1hakFrZkkONDRPbWgrQzZ5UT09>

or by phone 1 929 205 6099 and then enter Meeting ID:
917 2851 1834

and Passcode: 958203



Help WCSP Building Membership!

Three ways to win!

As part of our Membership 365 grant monies that we received from FEA, every new member that you recruit during the month of March, you will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card. We will duplicate this campaign and drawing for the month of April. The member that recruits the most new members during the March and April campaign will receive a \$100 gift card. In the event of a tie, the \$100 will be split evenly.