

Union Pulse

Colorado Springs Education Association

April 21, 2022

Two Big Topics This Week

Bargaining Updates (not minor stuff!)

Headlines in the Gazette reiterate that the BOE is planning to “cut to ratio” 53 teaching positions in D11. At the same time, they are arguing that teachers need to do more. In fact, they are shifting 3.5 Million in resources to fund a desired (but not articulated) 30 more minutes to the student day in Elementary. As a counter, we offered that D11 could reduce class size in the Elementary Schools by utilizing this 3.5 million to restore many, if not all, of the positions they cut. Piling more onto staff only accelerates resignations and retirements. The District has yet to provide any reason to believe that more of the same seat time will attract families, and claims of academic improvement are mixed at best. Yet, fully staffed buildings with manageable class sizes allows for long term gains, better staff retention, and appeals to community interests. We are eager to see how they respond and will be seeking members’ opinions as we progress.

We continue to press for choices and action that will benefit students, to which end the Bargaining Team asserted right off that we expect our time to be spent coming to evidence-based solutions that demonstrably meet the needs of students.

...which brings us the question of how the BoE’s desire not to pay any portion of the salary of the teacher elected to be CSEA president benefits students. The repeated assertions that CSEA is some kind of outsider (“separate”) organization—despite all members and officers being employees of D11 and taxpayers themselves—needs to be recalled every time the BoE claims it wants the president to remain an employee...just an employee that they don’t pay, but insist an outsider organization should pay? The BoE is having trouble hiding its desire to marginalize and even eliminate teachers’ chosen representation.

Despite the conspicuous silence of almost the entire BoE team and few contributions, our CSEA team noted much more than the following:

- teachers (District employees) desire representation
- a representative must—by definition—be a member of the group represented (so the president needs to be a D11 teacher, not an outsider),
- Other districts with Master Agreements regularly pay 100% of their presidents’ salaries.
- The District chooses to pay 100% of the ESP president’s salary.
- The president participates or appoints teachers to serve on District committees to assure that the essential teacher’s voice participates in shaping decisions.
- The president’s role and responsibility are centered around the many needs of D11.

Stay tuned for more as this progresses. Your rights are at stake.

Professional Activity

Students are obviously our focus as teachers. Yet as licensed professionals we know there is more: developing curriculum; decision-making teams; hiring, building, and district committees; and more. Taking time to engage these other aspects of a licensed teacher’s profession is *not* somehow failing to support your students, but part of supporting *all* the students, teachers, and

systems of the district. The principals hired to lead our schools, the way funds are spent and resources directed, how evaluations are conducted—ALL of these are critical to the effective operation of the district that teaches our students. That they are essential to teachers' professional lives is clear from how participation affects ratings in RANDA. *Did you know the CSEA president has the authority to place teachers on all District 11 committees?* Please let your AR know your interest in participating in this aspect of your profession, so we know who can provide the teacher voice in directing D11.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

Professional Greif Survey

The UCCS Department of Psychology is seeking individuals to participate in a survey research study to identify the greatest areas of need for professional grief support in the Colorado Springs community.

Participation in this study involves:

- Completing an online questionnaire that includes items on demographics, professional encounters related to bereavement (i.e., clients, students, patients), and perceived availability of bereavement support services in the community
- The questionnaire's average completion time is 10 minutes
- Individuals who complete this survey will be entered into a drawing to win one of five \$10 Amazon gift cards

Participants must be at least 18 years old and be fluent in English.

LINK TO SURVEY: https://surveyuccs.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2sDxZLjyKyNHL5s

For more information about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Rachel Weiskittle, by email at rweiskit@uccs.edu.

AR Deadline

The deadline to sign up self-nominate to serve as a building Association Representative for 2022-2023 is Thursday, April 28th! The self-nomination form is available [here](#). Serving as an AR is a great way to be involved in your professional association.

New Teacher Rebate

The Colorado Education Association (our state affiliate) has a program that allows us to give a partial refund of state dues to teachers who are in their first year of the teaching profession. This rebate program applies only to teachers who are in their first year of teaching in public education anywhere, in any district. If you think you qualify and haven't already completed the form, use this [link](#) so we can begin the verification process. If you did not teach full time, or if you joined later in the school year, your refund will be adjusted accordingly.

Colorado Rockies Baseball Promotion for PPEA & CSEA Members

In honor of Educator Appreciation Week, members of CSEA and PPEA will receive a discounted admission to the Rockies vs. Royals game on Sunday, May 15 at 1:10 p.m. at Coors Field in Denver. Price includes a \$10 concession credit (transportation and parking not included). Payment must be received by 5:00 p.m. on May 9th using the link below.

\$20/ticket for members (and family members/guests)

\$25/ticket for non-members
[Purchase Tickets Here!](#)

Article of Note

SB22-197 increases the **privatization of public education** and allows paid, non-elected organizations to “manage” schools in the innovation zones:

<https://mailchi.mp/b9cac4e2aed6/oppose-sb22-197?e=c7028b954b>

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