

Union Pulse

Colorado Springs Education Association
September 20, 2023

Don't Be Fooled!

Last year, we let members know about the Freedom Foundation in a few long emails. Who are they? What are their motives? In sum, they are a "[special interest think tank funded by corporate and the ultra-wealthy who want to dismantle state government, cut public services and jobs, and hand the provision of public services like education and worker's compensation over to the hands of private corporations.](#)" Their trolling of our membership – by numerous flashy mailings and canvassing at our doors – illustrates the deep pockets and political agenda. Among the most ironic (offensive?) was a recent mailer discussing how dropping CSEA would fund a person's retirement. It is bunk. CSEA's bargaining team has managed to significantly increase salary over several years (increases of between 32% and 55% over the past 9 years for each cell). On top of the increase in daily rate, CSEA (along with the state organization) knows that PERA and its defined benefits for all teachers is essential. PERA is deferred salary for a member's entire retirement, not just what they themselves put into the bank. On the other hand, let's examine their actual objectives concerning your retirement:

*"Recommendations to reform state pensions include **capping off the existing pension system and forming a defined-contribution system** State policymakers can also consider capping off pension ballooning in state employees' final years of service. Additionally, policymakers can also require **increased employee contributions**, limit retiree and rehire costs, and **raise the retirement age** for new employees." (emphasis added)*

These mailers, funded by groups aiming to end public education, know that unions stand in their privatization way. Don't be fooled.

"Ask CSEA"

MSLs and MSOs, Oh, my! Lots of questions about them this week, so we are getting the Union Pulse out early so you can get some info on this. We try to provide as reasonably *full* an explanation as possible.

First off, the request for MSLs/MSOs by this Friday, 22 September, is for a **DRAFT**, not a final product. The idea is that the *process* should be intentional vs. last minute, about which it's hard to complain and which is why *principals were given the timelines and outlines of this before teachers reported in August*. D11 is NOT trying to require a finished version ready to go a month early, and neither should your principal. So *draft* something and continue (we hope it's not "begin") the professional dialogue with your instructional leader (principal) to arrive at a finished product. Evaluation is supposed to be a collaborative process aimed at improving instruction.

As for issues with RANDA, they come from the state's reprogramming the system to provide some districts permissions to do things differently. *Already too techy and deep in the weeds? There's more!* This has had the added benefit of maiming the MSL worksheets for everyone else, so the state is saying "Do not release MSL worksheets." Now we are at work-around stage. As part of the superintendent's MSL Task Force, there is an effort to make sure MSLs/MSOs are aligned to standards, are grade and measurement appropriate, etc. Since the state has helped make things difficult, there is plenty of hoop-jumping. This is what principals were told (underlining added):

In District 11 we have an approaching deadline for the development of DRAFT MSL/MSOs for review and feedback. To hold to the district work, the Educator Effectiveness Office has developed Microsoft Office Forms for use by Teachers/SSPs/Principals for the collection MSL/MSOs by the September 22, 2023 date. This process will allow the MSL Task Force to review and provide feedback to principals before the October 12, 2023, deadline for finalized language for individual MSL/MSOs to be “locked-in”.

To be clear: Personally Identifiable Information is being scrubbed by the Director of Educator Effectiveness. So, yes, the superintendent’s task force will still be reviewing MSLs in the district as part of improving practice. No change there. Amassing them in the wake of the RANDA debacle has become a patchwork process.



Thumbs Up - Teachers Are Showing Up! Over the past several weeks, more than 50 teachers from CSEA took action to ensure we have a pro-public education school board. Last Saturday, more than 20 members canvassed around the Monroe Elementary School neighborhood and let voters know that we have an election and that students deserve a good school board. A big shout out to these members! Join us this Saturday out of the North MS parking lot. [Sign up here.](#)



Announcements & Upcoming Events

Canvasses for CSEA Candidates

This Saturday, September 23, we will be meeting at North Middle School parking lot at 9 am and canvassing until about 11:30 am for our recommended candidates. We know how important elections are, and that your actions are critical to our students. This November’s ballot is no exception, for rights and autonomy are on the menu. Please join us in helping elect pro-public education candidates. You can sign up at [this link](#) where more details are provided.

On Thursday, we are headed out of the Carver ES parking lot. Sign up [here.](#)

On Tuesday, we are headed out of the Palmer High School parking lot. Sign up [here.](#)

We look forward to seeing you.

Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment: September 2023

The **Sick Leave Bank** is a voluntary paid leave benefit and is designed to provide assistance to an employee that has exhausted all sick leave time and needs more paid leave to carry them through a critical illness/injury for the employee or their immediate family. Sick Leave Bank enrollment must be completed in PeopleSoft Self Service by September 30, 2023. Please review the Sick Leave Bank Instructions: FAQ's available [here](#) for any questions.

Breakfast & Flight Experience for CSEA Members

On Saturday, October 7, breakfast and a flight experience will be offered to members of CSEA by the Colorado Springs area chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) or EAA Chapter 72. Breakfast will be served from 8-11 am—after your flight. The cost for the experience is \$10 to the EAA. If you are interested in taking a flight (based on weather), email [Bill Epperson](#) to sign up. Include in the subject line a statement that indicates they are interested in an Eagle Flight. Flights are available for adults only.

Boo at the Zoo

CSEA will be handing out candy and stickers at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo's annual **Boo at the Zoo!** We need volunteers to help run the booth, pass out treats and talk to the community as they pass by. Shifts are for 2.5 hours on Sunday, October 22 and Sunday, October 29. Click [here](#) to view times and [sign up](#).

Articles of Note

Republicans, instead of attacking teachers unions, maybe help solve our educator shortage?

Teachers unions are far from perfect, but their flaws largely reflect a corrupt public education system where kids' well-being is just a talking point

Read in USA TODAY: https://apple.news/A_Tj1yUBWQ6aPCSxYipDdNQ

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