



Tony Gentile, Editor

September 2011

SECA NIPSCO SCSBDA

## Our Education Support Professionals

*Welcome Back...* On behalf of the Officers and Board members of our unions, we welcome you back to what we hope is a very productive and successful year for each of you. We know that we are facing difficult times in public education, but we must face these uncertainties in a unified way: TOGETHER! Now is the time for us to stand together! We must remain strong in our membership and even stronger in our commitment to public education and to our union and its ability to advocate on our behalf. We must remember that each of us makes up the Union—SECA, NIPSCO, Bus Drivers, and teachers. We must support each other and fight for what is right for all as workers and what is right for our workplace and the students we serve! Now is the time to stand up and speak up: tell a potential member why you became-and remain- a member. Tell a potential member about the good things that occur because of the Union! Warn them about the things that could happen without a strong union to advocate for them. Mainly, recruit that potential member and encourage them to join! If you have a question, need information, or need recruitment tips or materials, contact the office at 407/388-1131 or send an e-mail at [sea@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:sea@scps.k12.fl.us) and the office staff will be happy to accommodate you.

We wish you a successful 2011-2012 school year!

*Rosie Guerrido, SECA President*

*Joann Moran, NIPSCO Interim President*

*Randy Saunders, Bus Drivers President*

### LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Even though the Florida Retirement System (FRS) has been proven sound, the Legislature decided that public employees should make contributions into the retirement system. While a number of proposals were made, our state affiliate, the Florida Education Association, in a unified effort between state headquarters (officers and staff) and local affiliates lobbied and, while we could not hold off employees contributing, the amount of the contribution (3%) is significantly less than the Legislature wanted. Although each employee who participates in the FRS is now required to make a 3% contribution, this is a prime example of how collective action can change things. Collective action, a united front, and a bad situation was made less catastrophic. The Legislature convenes in January, but *NOW is The Time* for action. Get to know your local legislative delegation and make them know you. E-mails, post cards and letters to their local offices to introduce yourself as a VOTING citizen who works to educate children in Seminole County and who is concerned about the plight of public education in Florida. Also *NOW is the Time* for you to encourage potential members to join. Now is the Time for Unity. For news on issues, go to the UniServ website at [www.seminole-educators.org](http://www.seminole-educators.org) or to the state affiliate's site at [www.feaweb.org](http://www.feaweb.org). NOW is the time ...be a member and prepared!





## IMPORTANT!

### Attention - All Employees Who Subscribe to SCPS-provided Health Insurance!



In May 2011, the Schools Board approved the renewal of United Healthcare Plans for the 2011-2012 plan year. The Board is again offering single coverage at no cost to the employee.

There are three plans available from which employees can choose; the \$400 Deductible Wellness Plan, the \$1,500 Deductible Standard Plan or the Family Base Plan. In order to participate in the Wellness Plan, employees must have had an annual exam between August 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011.

If you wish to have the lower \$400 deductible, **PLEASE BE SURE TO HAVE A DOCUMENTED ANNUAL EXAM ON FILE WITH THE DISTRICT.** You can check to see if you already have a qualifying exam on file by going to the SCPS Employee Self Service page.

## Online Information...

Do you want up-to-date information about what's happening with SEA, NIPSCO, SECA, or SCSBDA? Would you like to access an electronic version of your contract or view the online calendar for important meetings and events for members? Do you wish to get information about bargaining and the coming legislative session? If so, please go to [www.seminole-educators.org](http://www.seminole-educators.org), your online resource to keep you up to date on everything affecting members.



[www.seminole-educators.org](http://www.seminole-educators.org)

## ESP Bargaining Update

Negotiators for SECA, NIPSCO, and SCSBDA have met with the District Bargaining team to begin the bargaining process this year. The meeting included introductions of all team members, exchanges of opening statements from the chief negotiators, and participation in a discussion about the SCPS budget. As it has been in recent years with less state funding, diminished property values, and the funding "cliff" resulting from the end of federal stimulus dollars, the climate in which your teams must bargain is very difficult, to say the least. While your team members are well aware of the District's budget crisis, it was made clear to the Board representatives that every member in the ESP units is likewise in his or her own personal budget crisis from increased costs of living and the new requirement forcing all FRS participants to pay 3% of earnings into retirement. Despite these challenges, your bargaining teams will work diligently to explore the District budget for available funds, provide thoughtful proposals, and seek solutions to address our issues.

*Your bargaining team members for 2011-12:*

**SECA** - Rosie Guerrido, Sharon Wiggins, and Joyce Peterson.

**NIPSCO** - JoAnn Moran, Craig Hopes, Carlos Crispin, and Bruce Law.

**SCSBDA** - Randy Saunders, Richie Hernandez, Dorothy Davis, and Eric Brady.

## **NIPSCO CORNER**

### **Vacancy Notices:**

We are looking for a President and Treasurer to join our leadership team. If you are interested, be on the lookout for the nomination forms. Be active in your association today!

**Newsflash:** Uniform allowances were not paid in the first paycheck of this year. Upon contacting the District to explain that the practice of employees being compensated at the beginning of the year, the District has informed the UniServ office that the uniform allowances will be paid in the September 16th paychecks.

## **SECA CORNER**

### **SECA SEEKS BOARD MEMBERS...**

Announcing 2 vacancies on the SECA Board of Directors. There were no nominations for these 2 positions during last year's election. The Bylaws stipulate that the Board of Directors shall fill vacancies; however the officers and the Board are seeking interested members and will elect from names submitted. For consideration, send a letter of interest with your name, work site and a brief statement of why you'd like to serve on the Board. Letters must be submitted by 5p.m. on September 20th via e-mail at [sea@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:sea@scps.k12.fl.us) and indicate SECA Board in the subject line.



### **MEMBERSHIP NEWS...**

Through a grant from FEA, SECA engaged former presidents Betty Bailey and Cynthia Dodson as recruiters to visit targeted worksites and talk with members and potential members. Membership increased! Thanks also to Debbie Young from Hagerty High and Rosie Guerrido from ESC for their efforts.

New Contracts are coming to your worksite. Each SECA Rep will receive a copy of the latest negotiated Contract (*July 1, 2010-June 30, 2013*). Wages yet to be determined, however. Please go to the UniServ website, [www.seminole-educators.org](http://www.seminole-educators.org) for bargaining updates.

## **Spring Break Shutdown Notice**

As part of the 2011-12 SCPS budget reduction plan, all cost centers will be closed during the 2011-12 Spring Break period from March 19<sup>th</sup> through March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> will be a paid holiday. 12-month employees will be impacted by this mandatory closing. Unlike years past, employees will be able to choose any combination of personal and/or vacation days during this time. It is important to consider NOW that these affected employees must "save up" accrued personal/vacation leave in order to be paid during the shutdown.

## **DRIVER CORNER**

### **The ABC Plan — Know Your Contract**

In the contract there is an **ABC** plan from which to choose. Below is a synopsis of each plan.

**PLAN A:** Drivers who request and are approved are guaranteed a minimum of 40 hours per week from the opening to the closing of school. Drivers must be available for field trip- and other non-driving duties as assigned. Duties may be assigned on weekends and evenings as well as during the regular workday.

**PLAN B:** Drivers who request and are approved are guaranteed a minimum of 35 hours per week from the opening to the closing of school. Drivers must be available for field trips and other non-driving duties as assigned. Duties are assigned during the daytime and not after 6:00 pm and weekends. However, drivers can volunteer to work after 6:00pm if the field trip starts before 6:00pm. There should be no penalty for a driver who denies a field trip that extends beyond 6:00 pm.



**PLAN C:** Drivers who request and are approved are guaranteed a minimum of 30 hours per week from the opening to the closing of school. Drivers shall not be assigned non-route duties.

Using the employee profile sheets and with all things being equal, a rotation system shall be implemented by the master scheduler for assigning equal duties for day, night, weekend trips and other related duties. Also, if it is determined that the number of drivers requesting PLAN A or B is more than the number of positions available, then the most senior employee shall receive the assignment of his/her choice.

## ESP CONFERENCE

Shaunte Alexander says the FEA ESP conference was an amazing experience. She was able to meet with ESP members from across the state. Shaunte learned all about the professional development opportunities that FEA has to offer.

Shaunte explained what she took back from the conference, "Too often, professional development activities by the county office for support personnel is provided with little regard for the individual needs and goals of the staff," she says. "But by all the ESPs coming together, from different counties, we were able to learn what works in different situations and we received wonderful professional development from FEA."

## IMPORTANT DATES

Sept 19, 2011 NIPSCO Board Meeting 4:00 p.m.

Sept 21, 2011 SECA Board Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Oct 19, 2011 SECA Board Meeting 5:30 pm.

Oct 27-29, 2011 FEA DA

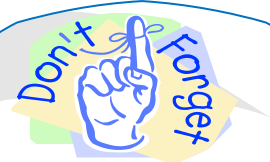
Nov 14, 2011 SCSBDA Board Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Nov 15, 2011 SCSBDA General Membership Meeting 10:00 a.m.

### Save the Date:

Nov 16, 2011 ESP Day, More details to follow

Dec 10, 2011 SCSBDA Holiday Party, More details



## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS



During the 2011 legislative session, elected officials made great changes in Florida's public school system. Throughout the session, Seminole Uniserv was able to pull together as an organization. It was inspiring. We sent emails; made phone calls; held and attended rallies; wrote letters to the editor; etc. That degree of solidarity, courage, and strength is beyond impressive—it's phenomenal. We won some battles and lost some, but without the strength of Seminole Uniserv or FEA, it could have been disastrous. Ask yourselves, without our organization, who will be on your side when you need help?

In these difficult times, the need for Seminole Uniserv is greater than ever. We have seen and heard what many legislators think about teachers, support staff, and public schools. We know that we cannot depend on the current statehouse stronghold to advocate for public education, so we must speak loudly with one voice.

The key to our future success is our solidarity. Educators still need representation, advocacy, legal protection, contract enforcement, and especially a voice at the table which we can maintain with a strong Association membership. Collective bargaining will be limited to bargaining wages and fringe benefits, and discussion will still occur, but to bargain effectively we must have strong membership. Your Association is the only group advocating for public school educators. We can sit back and let it happen or we can resolve to regain what has been taken from us by sticking together and supporting each other. Doing anything less will only give out opponents what they want. Our detractors are counting on you to give up on this fight and to turn your back on your Association. As Winston Churchill once said, **"If we are together nothing is impossible, if we are divided, all will fail."** Let's not give them what they want. Let's stay together, work together, and fight together to protect and to regain what we know is right for our students, our public schools, and ourselves.

We ask that you recruit anyone who is not a current member, and share this information with them. Should you have any questions, please contact the Seminole UniServ office at 407-388-1131.