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Safety and Security in Your School

Last week’s school shooting in Kentucky, in which two students died and 14 others suffered bullet wounds, was the 11th school shooting since the start of 2018 in the U.S. Unfortunately, school shootings are a reality we have to contend with.

Do you feel unsafe at work? Are there threats in your school that are not being adequately dealt with? Call the DCTA Advocacy hotline at (303) 243-5221 or email the DCTA office and let us know! Colorado takes the safety of students, educators, and school staff very seriously and there are laws in place to protect students and educators. The Safe Schools Act requires that schools have a safety plan, think about bullying on campus, think about threat assessment, and do everything that they can to protect students and staff. Additionally, the Colorado Claire Davis School Safety Act allows lawsuits for cases of violence if a school fails to exercise “reasonable care” to protect all students, faculty, and staff from “reasonably foreseeable” acts of violence that occur at a school or school-sponsored activity.

Lobby your Elected Officials Next Week!

It is vital that you take the time to speak with your Colorado legislators.

DCTA Lobby Day will be Wednesday, February 7. If you are passionate about educating Colorado legislators regarding students and teachers’ needs, join us as we talk with them in person. These one on one conversations will help shape policy discussions around hot topics for 2018, including proposed PERA changes, teacher shortages, and parental notification.

Participants will meet at 8:00 am at the CEA Building (1500 Grant St) with many other Associations and receive a briefing from CEA political staff. After a Q & A session, members will walk over to the State Capitol to flood the building with constituents promoting the needs of public education. Click here to RSVP.
Chance to win $500 and/or a Burrito Party!

DCTA Membership Campaign

Anyone who becomes a DCTA member between now and March 11 will be entered in a drawing where 2 people will each win $500.

The Benefits of DCTA Membership:

⇒ Add your voice to the thousands of teacher voices across the District, fighting to better our students learning environment and teachers’ working conditions

⇒ Collective Bargaining: In addition to bargaining issues related to salary, benefits and due process, the Bargaining Team works to promote educator voice on critical issues including [read more].

⇒ Educational Excellence & Leadership Programs: DCTA offers seminars, trainings, and informational materials on topics including [read more].

⇒ The Beauty of a Dollar Saved: DCTA members also enjoy great discount programs and perks [read more].

Reminder—Legal services are available to members who have been in the Union for 30+ days prior to any work-related incident needing representation.

Click HERE to join!

Three Ways to Win a Burrito Party at your school:

1) The school with the most new members between now and 3/11 will win a burrito party.

2) The school with the greatest increase in percentage of membership will win a burrito party. (If you are at a small school and your membership increases from 25% to 65%, your school could win)

3) Every school that attains 100% membership in DCTA will win a burrito party.

PERA Legislative Update

The first PERA bill has been introduced at the state legislature. This new bad PERA bill, HB1111 would allow anyone on the PERA Board to view your personal information for any reason at all. The bill also changes the composition of the PERA Board. Both Secure PERA and PERA are opposed to House Bill 1111. [Read more about this bill] on Secure PERA’s website.

What can you do? Take Action to Protect PERA!

⇒ Attend the DCTA Lobby Day on Wednesday, February 7.

⇒ Attend the Senator Williams PERA Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, February 3 from 10:00 am—11:30 am at the Carla Madison Recreation Center (2401 E Colfax Ave).

⇒ Converse with legislators, local influencers, the general public or friends and family, or [write a Letter to the Editor] on:
Have your voice heard! Take the 15 minute TLCC Survey!  
(formerly TELL Colorado)

The Teaching & Learning Conditions Colorado survey closes on February 23 and so far, only 2% of DPS employees have completed it. **TLCC is an anonymous and confidential survey** for Colorado’s school-based staff to share perceptions of teaching and learning conditions. This is the one opportunity teachers have to join together and provide reliable data to our schools, districts, and state policymakers on our teaching and learning conditions. Unlike Collaborate, this survey was not created by DPS, asks the types of questions teachers need to answer and allows comparison across districts (and states, as well). We want every teacher’s voice to be heard to let policymakers know what you need to do your job well. Learn more about TLCC online.

**Schools with 50% participation can win money!**—CEA will hold two weekly drawings of $150 for all schools with members that have reached 50% participation in the TLCC survey. The drawings will be held Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14 and Feb. 21. A fifth drawing will be held Feb. 28 if the survey window is extended. Additionally, a $500 final grand prize drawing will be held after the survey closes for one school that has reached 95% participation in the TLCC survey.

Frequently Asked Questions
TLCC Fact Sheet

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**Teacher Compensation Bargaining Session Tonight**  
The ProComp Agreement now expires in **44 days, on March 14!**

The next Bargaining Session is **TONIGHT**, Tuesday, January 30 from 5:30 pm to 9 pm at the **Acoma Campus** (1617 S. Acoma St). February and March session dates are on **Wednesday, February 7; Thursday, February 22; and Wednesday, March 14.**

***Contact your UD Kate Martin, Alizay Furtado, or Brock Grosso to schedule a meeting to discuss a new teacher compensation system in DPS. Changes are being bargained now, and it is imperative that you know where we are headed on YOUR compensation system.***

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**Welcome New DCTA Members!**

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District Approves Charters, Choice, and Co-Location

The DPS Board of Education approved district contracts with about 20 charter schools at the Jan 25 school board meeting, including 5 new schools, amid predominantly anti-charter public comment.

Board Members Dr. Carrie Olson and Jennifer Bacon expressed concern over the district’s expansion of charter school options. Bacon read an impassioned statement about the lack of diversity of models in charter schools, calling for conversation around the need for a comprehensive high school in the far northeast. She acknowledged dropping enrollment across the district, while questioning the opening of new charters and continued co-location of many schools. Despite these strong words of caution, Bacon still voted for the approval of all charter school contracts.

In the end, only Olsen voted nay to contracts with 5 of the approximately 20 charters on the table - the 5 new schools, citing concerns over dropping enrollment and limited space for new schools.

Public Comment Weighs In on Charters, Choice, and Co-Location

Teachers from North High School read a letter to Tom Boasberg, quoting his 2012 promise to relocate Strive High School should the space ever become uncomfortable for the co-location of the two schools. They raised concerns over the fact that the entire student body of North High School must use the lunch room at one time - making lines so untenable that many students skip lunch; whereas the Strive students sit in an almost empty cafeteria during their lunch period. Mindful of not projecting an anti-Strive agenda, the teachers requested directly from Boasberg that he honor his 2012 promise to relocate Strive when growth required it.

Teacher, Jacqueline Falcon, South High School, and Amy Carrington, community member, cautioned the district against false choice created by enrollment zones and a choice office deciding where a student goes to school. Carrington criticized the free market system being used by DPS to “create chaos and confusion for parents and communities.” She referenced the recent closing of Gilpin and its aftermath in the community.

In an open call to board members to “represent their constituents and not those who bought your seats” Falcon ended with admonishment of the board for opening new charter schools in the midst of lacking space and the constant co-location of schools with little transparency and accountability or adequate space.

~ Board Accountability Team (BAT) Committee

If you would like to join the BAT Committee, contact Alizay Furtado.

Reminder - Union Dues Are Tax-Deductible: If you itemize, you can include all but $89.00 ($7.42 per month) from your dues in your deductions.
Save the Date—Excellence in Education Scholarship and Awards Gala

The Education Center presents the 9th annual salute to Excellence in Education Scholarship and Awards Gala—a program to honor educators of color. The gala is on Friday, March 2 at 7:00 pm at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel Denver (3203 Quebec St.). For more information call 720-326-5176 or visit www.theeductr.com.

Rise Up! NW Happy Hour

Thursday, February 8, 4:30 pm—6:00 pm

Calling all early career educators (8 years of experience or less): Join us for appetizers and happy hour drink specials at "Bout Time Pub & Grill (3392 W 38th Ave).

The first 10 people will get a free drink!

Rise Up is a diverse and active group of early career educators providing practical and emotional supports. We are active, social justice-oriented educators working to engage and empower others in advocating for our students and communities! Come join teachers from across the district and let’s work together to be the change we want to see for our students!

School Visits

Last Friday: We spent time at Colfax Elementary, Collegiate Prep Academy, DCIS Ford, Grant Ranch, Kunsmiller, Lake, Lena Archuleta Elementary, Skinner, South, Summit.

This week: We will be visiting Ashley Elementary, Delta, Denison, Holm Elementary, Kennedy, Monroe, Montclair, Sandra Todd-Williams, Schmitt, and Teller Elementary.

Regional Open Houses

Drop in to an open house near you to receive current information about your new contract, upcoming ProComp negotiations, etcetera from a Uniserv Director. Have your voice heard and join the conversation for what matters most for our students.

Café Chihuahua Open House
Wednesday, January 24, 4—6 pm
2250 S Federal Blvd

Café Chihuahua Open House
Wednesday, February 21, 4—6 pm
2250 S Federal Blvd

'Bout Time Pub & Grub Open House
Wednesday, January 31, 4—6 pm
3392 W 38th Ave

'Bout Time Pub & Grub Open House
Wednesday, February 28, 4—6 pm
3392 W 38th Ave
DCTA Elections are Approaching

We look forward to active participation in our election process to promote growth and build the strength of our union. If you are interested in running for a position or nominating a fellow member, stay tuned for materials coming soon. Nominations will be accepted February 27 through March 16.

1st & 2nd Grade Chandeliers displayed at Colfax Elementary. Inspired by Dale Chihuly and made out of plastic cups and bottles.
How valuable a Defined-Benefit retirement system is to an educators’ compensation package as deferred pay. Attacks on the DB system should be opposed as it is an attack on educator pay.

The economic impact of PERA in our communities. $6.1 BILLION in economic output helps sustain 32,800 jobs. $271M in tax revenue for our schools, roads, etc.

How the state helped put us in this mess by underfunding PERA by $4.5 BILLION since 2001. While the state paid their statutory obligation, they did not pay their actuarially required contribution (ARC) or now actuarially determined contribution (ADC) that fluctuates from year to year.

How PERA was 100% funded around 2000 then Gov. Owens offered years of service for pennies on the dollar partly leading to retirements we see today.

That PERA is not running out of money unlike 2010 when Senate Bill 1 was needed to ensure solvency. We are however actively seeking solutions now to minimize the risk associated with a trajectory of the PERA Fund being below 20% funded and an amortization period of 78 years in the school division. BUT any solution has to account for the impact on real people and communities. Again, see our CEA Guiding Principles for more.

The PERA Board met their statutory and fiduciary responsibility by proposing their package of reforms. HOWEVER, the legislature can account for the human impact of changes to PERA – how it affects 500,000 Coloradans directly – and pass a reasonable solution that minimizes the pain felt by all.