Thank you for voting!

In communities across Denver, voters affirmed their commitment to public schools and their unwavering support for our students. Pro-public education candidates were elected who will put student success first and will create the collaborative partnership that educators want with their administrators and elected school officials.

We extend our greatest thanks and appreciation to the hundreds of educators who gave their time and talents to participate in neighborhood walks, phone banks, and all other forms of support for these critical campaigns. The fight is far from over though. DCTA remains committed to addressing the growing teacher shortage crisis, advocating for more public school funding to better serve our students, and creating a stronger PERA retirement system for school employees.

~ Henry Roman, DCTA President

ProComp Negotiations Start Thursday!
The ProComp Agreement expires in 48 days on December 31!

Did you fill out the ProComp Bargaining Survey? We need your opinion before we start negotiating with the District on Thursday!

Attend the first bargaining session on Thursday, November 16! We have four confirmed dates for ProComp 3.0 – November 16, November 30, December 7, and December 18. These sessions will take place at the Acoma Campus (1617 S. Acoma St) from 5 pm until roughly 9 pm and are open to the public. The DCTA and DPS bargaining teams are working to approve more dates, which we will send to you as soon as they are confirmed.
How to attain Non-Probationary Status:

To attain Non-Probationary status a teacher must receive three (3) consecutive years of an "Effective" rating, or greater, AND must have a position in the same district which gave the "Effective" rating, or higher, on the fourth (4th) year.

If you are at an innovation school, please review your innovation plan to verify whether or not your plan waived TECDA. Many innovation schools do not allow you to achieve non-probationary status. Contact us with questions.

If you are a teacher who has entered or will be entering an innovation school and you have attained Non-Probationary status, your Non-Probationary Status will be placed "on-hold". If you leave the innovation school, your Non-Probationary status will be "re-activated".

Win a Burrito Party for your School!

Any school that gets 5 new members between October 17 and January 1, will receive a burrito party! The following schools are in the running so far:

3 New Members:
- Place Bridge Academy
- Denver Green School
- Denver Montessori
- Doull Elementary

2 New Members:
- Abe Lincoln High School
- Florida Pitt Waller
- Hallett Academy
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Early College
- Legacy Options High School
- Montclair
- DSISD
- Farrell B Howell
- Green Valley Elementary
- High Tech Early College
- High Tech Elementary
- John F Kennedy High School

1 New Member:
- Beach Court Elementary
- Bill Roberts
- Cole Arts & Sciences Academy
- Cowell Elementary
- McMeen Elementary
- Northfield High School
- South High School
- Southmoor Elementary
- Swigert International

We are hearing there are a ton of discipline issues in DPS schools. If your school has discipline issues and we have not heard from you, contact us! We need to know!
Congratulations to Saturday’s ASIST Graduates!

A special thank you to our members who took "Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training" this past weekend! The participants were really engaged with the content, and committed to helping students and colleagues keep safe from suicide. Thanks as well to our staff who helped organized the workshop, Lila and Diana, without whose help it would not have been possible.

We will be organizing another class for 2018, so stay tuned for more information! In the meantime, there will be a 3.5 hour safeTALK class (Suicide Alertness for Everyone) on December 2. Click here for more information and/or to buy tickets.

~ Dr. Timothy Brown, DCTA Member and ASIST Registered Trainer

DCTA Holiday Celebration!

You are cordially invited to attend our annual Winter Holiday Party where we get to celebrate YOU! Please come and share some time with friends old and new. The food is delicious every year, and the secret is out: we serve adult beverages. Join us on Tuesday, December 19 at 4:30 in the Columbine Room of the DCTA Office/CEA building (1500 Grant St). There's plenty of free parking! Hope to see you there! Click here to RSVP so we know how much food to order.
Rise Up November Committee Meeting

Join us for the November Rise Up meeting, Monday, November 27 at 5:30 pm at Lincoln Elementary (710 S Pennsylvania St)! We will be organizing a Mindfulness Training that will offer exercises and techniques to help reduce stress as well as planning other trainings new teachers need. Click here to RSVP.

Rise Up is a diverse and active group of early career educators (8 years of experience or less) 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 week: We spent time at Denver Discovery, DCIS Montbello, Ellis, Emily Griffith Campus, Excel Academy, George Washington High School, Isabella Bird, Kaiser, Oakland, and Sabin.

This week: We will be visiting Bear Valley, Carson, College View, DCIS Montbello, Denver Montessori, Lake Middle School, Legacy Options, Marie L. Greenwood, North High School, Oakland, and Prep Academy.

If you have not had your DCTA Back to School meeting yet, email your Uniserv Director—Darnell Tingle or Kate Martin to schedule one.

REP COUNCIL

The November Rep Council meeting is Tuesday, November 28 after Thanksgiving Break at DCIS Baker (574 W 6th Ave) from 4:30 pm—6 pm.

All members are welcome to attend. We will provide training on mid-year conversations and ways to practice self-care.

It is important for all Reps to attend monthly Rep Council meetings this year. Rep Training is occurring at each Rep Council versus at a weekend training.
Regional Open Houses

We are hosting regional open houses to make it more convenient for educators to remain up to date on everything happening with DCTA. All members and non-members are welcome to attend. 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.

At the November 15 Regional Open House, starting at 5:00 pm we will talk to folks interested in EMAC (Ethnic Minority Advisory Committee). EMAC promotes awareness of ethnic minority issues and encourages the development of organizational strategies to address those issues. EMAC also supports the recruitment and retention of ethnic minority educators and promotes ethnic minority involvement at all levels of the organization.

**Café Chihuahua Open House**
Wednesday, November 15, 3:45—6:00 pm
2250 S Federal Blvd
[Click here to RSVP]

**'Bout Time Pub & Grub Open House:**
Wednesday, November 29, 3:45—6:00 pm
3392 W 38th Ave
[Click here to RSVP]

DCIS Montbello and Farrell B. Howell representing the Far North East at last week’s Regional Open House at the Green Valley Ranch Beer Garden.
Are you considering waiving your DPS Health Benefits?

Although it is not time for open enrollment for DPS health insurance, the District allows changes to be made on healthcare plans whenever there is a life event. An example of a life event would be taking advantage of the Affordable Care Act’s open enrollment period. During this time you can drop your DPS coverage to join your spouse’s plan or enroll in your own plan. Some of our members who have done this have been disappointed when they opted to change plans. Here are some things to consider so you can make an educated decision.

Things to consider:

♦ When you select alternate insurance from the health exchange, you will be paying with after-tax dollars (which means you will be foregoing a savings of 20 – 25% on insurance premiums had you selected a DPS before-tax plan).

♦ Look closely at what is covered in each plan. Make sure you are comparing apples to apples. Some plans may not be as comprehensive.

♦ If you waive DPS health benefits, you will get the $422.17 (for Full-Time employees) DPS contributes to your health plan, but if you do not get another form of healthcare coverage you may have to pay a fine when you file your taxes.

♦ If you are on FMLA leave and receiving your full pay, DPS will deduct your health insurance premium from your paycheck. If you are on FMLA but not receiving pay, DPS will bill you and you will maintain coverage as long as the bill is paid. If you are on leave that is not FMLA and you’re not being paid, you can get COBRA but no flex dollars.

♦ Your age is a consideration. If you go to the exchange, or to any individual healthcare plan, you will be charged more if you are older. Large companies, like DPS, spread the risk and do not factor age into your premiums. You will also pay more if you are a smoker or live outside the metro area.

There are two types of deductible medical plans, embedded and non-embedded. [A deductible is the amount you have to pay out-of-pocket before your health insurance coverage pays for covered benefits.] Under family coverage, an embedded deductible is the individual deductible for each covered person, embedded in the family deductible. Once each family member meets his or her embedded deductible, health insurance begins paying for covered services, regardless of whether the larger family deductible is met. With a non-embedded deductible, (also referred to as an aggregate deductible.) the total family deductible must be paid  

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out-of-pocket before health insurance starts paying for the health care services incurred by any family member.

♦ With a non-embedded plan, there are just employee and family levels. If you are insuring only yourself, through one of the DPS 1300 deductible medical plans, be aware that if you are an expectant mother on a $1300 non-embedded plan, as soon as the baby is born you will have a family deductible that increases to $2600. By State law for fully insured medical plans, a newborn must go on the mother’s plan and is premium free for the first 30 days, but the deductible does increase to the family level for non-embedded plans.

♦ Out of pocket maximums: The most you have to pay for covered services in a plan year. After you spend this amount on deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance, your health plan pays 100% of the costs of covered benefits. The out-of-pocket limit doesn’t include your monthly premiums. It also doesn’t include anything you spend for services your plan doesn’t cover. The amount of out of pocket maximums vary by policy. So be sure you compare what yours would be with a DPS policy to what it would be on a non-DPS policy. Also note what constitutes a plan year. If you are already on your way to paying your maximum because the DPS plan year started in July, you may have to start over on new plan even though you were not on the DPS plan for 12 months.

Open Enrollment at connectforhealthco.com commenced November 1, 2017 and closes January 31, 2018. Any policy purchased through this process becomes effective either January 1, 2018 or February 1, 2018, depending upon when you enroll. If you purchase directly from an insurer, the coverage begins the first of the month after you enroll.

We hope this information helps our members with their healthcare decisions. For more information call

The DCTA Office will be closed for the week of Thanksgiving. Have a wonderful break!