



UNION OF ESCAMBIA ESP

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ESP FRIDAY UPDATE

On Monday evening, President Fedrick Ingram shared with all the local presidents of Florida Education Association's local Unions, that the NEA Delegate Assembly will be held virtually with a limited agenda. More information to follow. President Ingram also stated that the AFT Convention is still planned for July 24 – 27th in Houston, Texas. They will let us know if changes will be made.

Also President Ingram said "I want to reiterate that it was *your* hard work, your dedication and your leadership that was monumental in getting the governor to put the health and safety of our students, our families and our members first." We recently put the word out through our texting program and asked our members to sign a petition requesting that virtual learning continue for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Our efforts as well as other local unions around the state have kept our district from bringing over 40,000 students, 1900 ESPs and 2900 teachers back into physical buildings and endangering the lives of many. THANK YOU for standing with your union during this difficult time and letting your voice be heard.

On Tuesday, the FEA held a meeting for local presidents. Topic was "Bargaining must go on..." albeit virtually! The FEA reminded us that bargaining must go on despite the Corona virus. Your union is gearing up to do some virtual negotiations. Our Florida Governor rightfully stated that "This is the year of the Teacher". OK, we all know our teachers are about the lowest paid in the nation. He has said they *ALL* should begin at \$47,500 per year. With the current budget proposal on the table in Tallahassee the legislators fall short of funding our districts properly to get our teachers there.

So, what about the ESPs? Well... that is a good question, one our governor has yet to answer. I suppose it is not our year. But make no mistake about it. Your ESP bargaining committee will be at the virtual table hammering out a decent proposal.

Over the last three years I am very proud of the agreements that we ratified on salaries and step movements, even COLAs. (cost of living adjustments). However, there is still room for improvement in all areas of education support jobs. I am asking all our union members to stay in touch with their union. Follow us on our website, escambiafea.org, and our Facebook pages. We do not know how the new school year ahead will look. Some of the questions posed at the FEA town hall meeting Thursday evening were "Will it be safe to load our buses again like we did?" "What about classroom safety?" "Will we all have to wear masks?" Whatever it will look like, it will be here soon enough.

I want to personally thank all our members that were able to be on the call Thursday evening. Escambia County member voices were heard. I am proud of all our members. Stay in touch, keep your distance, and STAY SAFE!

David Elzbeck, President