

KEEPING YOU INFORMED



The information provided in this newsletter is to keep you informed and updated. Much of the information included in this are state mandates, legislative rulings, and new policies. This information is not necessarily liked or agreed upon by any this messenger; it is merely an attempt to keep you aware of current news that may impact you or your school.

#1. DISTRICT GRADE-We are an “A” District once again! Thank you for all of the hard work and dedication that you have provided our students. Every school in our district positively contributed to our district grade-thank you!

#2. BEST & BRIGHTEST (B&B)-New changes with B&B were made by legislation. You can find the complete B&B Teacher Program by searching in the following Florida Statutes: 1012.731 and 1012.732 and the full B&B Principal Program by searching 1011.62. The information below has been provided by the Department of Education (DOE) to all Florida school districts to assist with the numerous questions that continue to surround B&B. There is a lot of confusing language for this, and there are still lots of questions. You will be updated with information as we get answers. Below is an abbreviated description of the three new categories of teacher awards associated with B&B.

- **RECRUITMENT AWARD** –this is for newly hired classroom teachers who are considered to be a “content area expert” in one of the following areas: mathematics, science, computer science, reading or civics. DOE has developed the definition for “expert” as someone who holds a master’s degree in math, science, computer science, reading or civics or earned a bachelor’s degree in one of those areas and has five years teaching experience in that area or 5 years work experience in that area. For reading, the following are included in that category as it relates to a degree earned and/or subject taught: English, English literature, reading, or literacy instruction. For civics, the following are included in that category as it relates to a degree earned and/or subject taught: political science, American history, social studies, or social science. Only k-12 classroom teachers are eligible for this, the same as in the past.

There are a few questions that we still have surrounding the Recruitment Award. We are navigating through all of this and will keep you informed of updates. Keep in mind that this is a recruitment award for “newly hired” teachers. The award for this is \$4,000.00.

-**RETENTION AWARD**-this is the only award that is fairly clear. To be eligible, you must be rated as HE or E for the previous school year (2018-2019), be employed at that same school for 2 years which includes the present year, and the school must have improved by at least 3 percentage points of the total possible points achieved for determining school grades assessments over the past 3 years. There are 3 different ways to calculate “improving 3 percentage points.” However, the state will provide a list of those schools who qualify using all 3 calculation possibilities in an effort to include as many schools as possible. Only k-12 classroom teachers are eligible for this, same as in the past. The award for this is \$2,500 for HE teachers and \$1,000 for E teachers. Again, this is based on your 2018-2019 evaluation.

-**RECOGNITION AWARD**-this award is not limited to just classroom teachers as is defined in statute. The recognition award is for all instructional personnel and selected by his or her school principal, based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the district school board. This category includes media specialists, guidance counselors, speech pathologists, and all other k-12 instructional personnel. Unfortunately, this is also only for k-12. There is no set amount for this. Each district will be given a set

amount of funds for all three awards. The first two awards have set amounts. For the Recognition Award, what funds are left over after awarding funds to all of the teachers and any principal receiving the principal award, will be what is left. A teacher earning the Retention award is eligible for the Recognition Award.

-PRINCIPAL AWARD

A school principal is eligible to receive an award if he or she has served as school principal at his or her school for at least four consecutive years and the school has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior three years. The Department of Education will let us know which schools have improved by three percentage points. The award for this is \$5,000.00

#3. COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROGRAM (CEP)-All students eat all meals for FREE!! Please encourage all of your students to take advantage of this. We want as many students as possible to eat these free meals. The middle schools and high school will even have a “grab & go” breakfast bag with healthy food provided if they do not want a full hot breakfast. This is great for our students and great for our parents!

#4. HEALTH INSURANCE-Health insurance has increased by \$1,175 for those with the family plan and \$400 for those with a single plan.

1. Remember to take advantage of CHP’s remote access (amwell.com). You can download the app and have 24 services to a doctor at no additional charge. A doctor can diagnose and prescribe medication for things like the following: allergies, coughing, cold, flu, fever, earache, minor infections, including UTI’s, upper respiratory symptoms, and more.
2. If you are a member of a gym, you can get reimbursed for up to \$150.00 of your gym membership. Fill out the online form found at the CHP website (the district will also send this out to everyone) and submit a gym membership receipt. Most gyms also have this form available if you ask them for it.

#5. INCREASED SALARY-The raise that you received in one lump sum in June will be spread out in each paycheck. Remember that this was a raise which means you receive it every year and it counts towards retirement. Best & Brightest is similar to a bonus. It does not count towards your retirement and may or may not be given from year to year.

#6. SINGLE SIGN ON-This is the new way to see your pay stub. There are mixed feelings about this, but it is actually easy to do once you do it. If you have any difficulty signing on, please see your school secretary or principal for assistance.

#7. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE-Every employee now has three days of bereavement leave for the unfortunate death of immediate family members. The definition of “immediate family” can be found in the Master Teacher Contract located on the district web page. The three days does not mean you cannot use more leave, but the three days used does not impact your sick leave or personnel leave. There are now new Leave Forms that have this included as an option to check.

#8. ESE TEACHERS-If you are a self-contained classroom ESE teacher or an ESE teacher who writes at least 15 IEP’s, you get one day every nine weeks to plan and work on your IEP’s (or anything else that you may need to work on). You need to coordinate the best day to do this with your school principal so that the day you select is not one that is already heavily impacted by teachers’ absence. You can either work at your school, the district office (we will set up a room for you), or at another school site if you want to plan and collaborate with a peer. Try to plan this ahead for this as much as possible. The exact language of this is included in the Master Teacher Contract located on the district website.

#9 SCHOOL SAFETY- As Superintendent shared at the Welcome Back Breakfast, we now have 3 Guardians added to our Safety Program. These are excellent additions to the School Resource Officers and what they are providing for our students and our employees. The following is a list of deputies and guardians and their assigned school:

CES-Deputy Andrea Sessor

MES-Deputy Kenneth Malfers

RES-Deputy Mitch Revels

SES-Deputy Brandon Hunt

Prek-Deputy Rick Buckley

WMS-Guardian James McDonald, Sgt. Joe Page

WHS-Guardian Mike Crum, Deputy Evelyn Brown, Deputy Michael Alexander

RMS-Guardian Bronson Sweatt, Deputy Kenneth Miller

WI-Deputy Jimmy Sessor

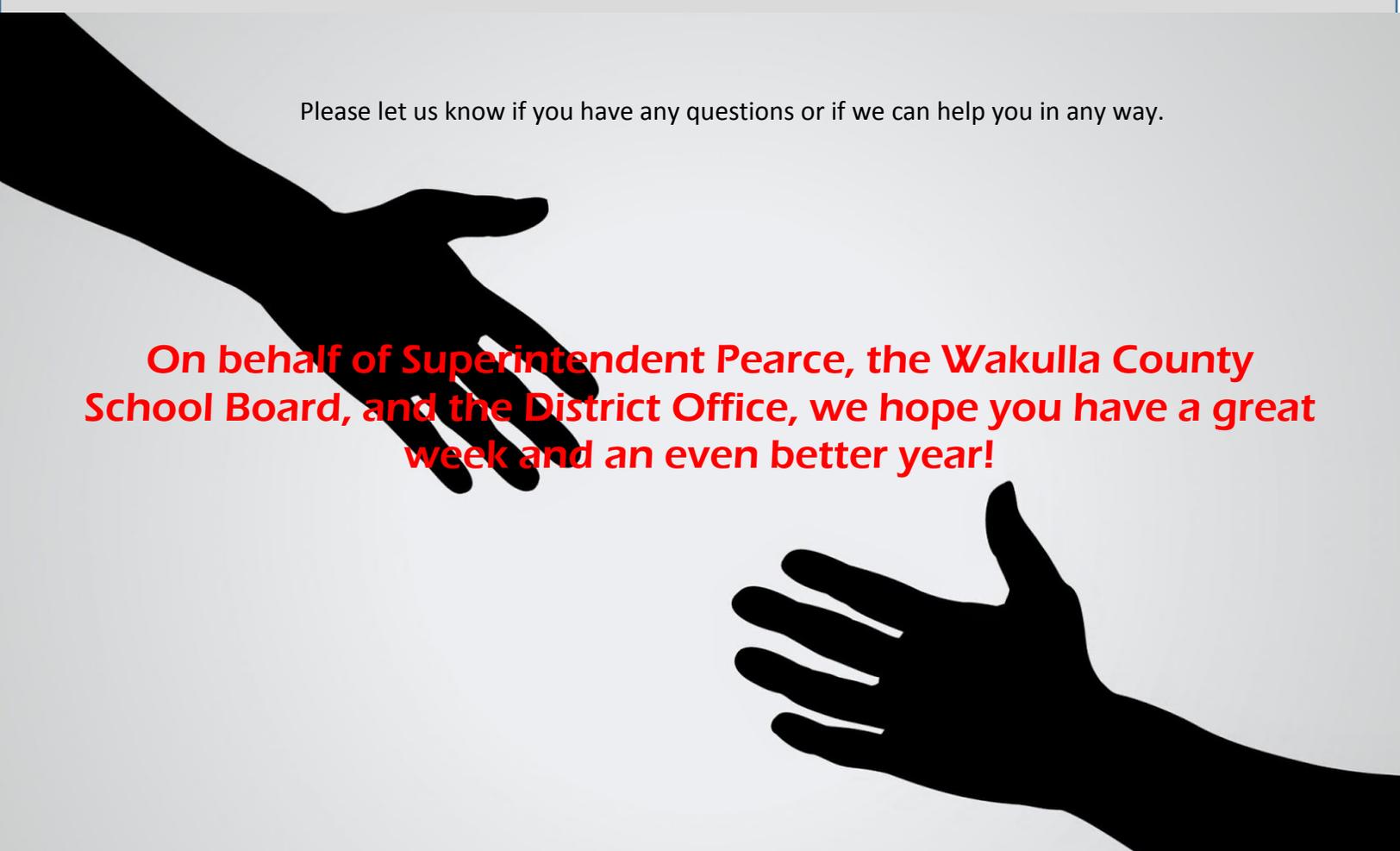
Remember to wear your name badges and keep your doors locked!

#10 MENTAL HEALTH- We have two new social workers, Angie Still and Kathryn Hummel, joining the Wakulla Team and training with Jana McCommon and the ESE/Mental Health Department. Both of these ladies are Masters Level Social Workers (MSW) and will be visiting your schools, introducing themselves, and getting to know you and your students.

#11 NEW HIRES-We have a total of 24 teachers newly hired to Wakulla County. There are a few teachers who elected to try something different and join another school inside our district, but for new hires, we are at 24. We still have several newly hired teachers we are processing to get ready for your schools, so welcome them as you see them.

#12 MASTER TEACHER CONTRACT-Negotiations are under way. Our next meeting is August 20th.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can help you in any way.



On behalf of Superintendent Pearce, the Wakulla County School Board, and the District Office, we hope you have a great week and an even better year!