



May 20, 2020

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## **FEA, UFF bring together education experts, stakeholders to address reopening public schools, state colleges and universities**

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Education Association (FEA), in conjunction with the United Faculty of Florida (UFF), will bring together a wide and diverse range of experts and stakeholders beginning this week to explore how Florida can best reopen public schools, state colleges and universities. Two committees, one focused on PreK-12 and one on higher education, will begin work Thursday with the goal of producing policy recommendations by June 2.

“Discussions about the future of our campuses need to include the people most directly involved with our schools — students, parents, teachers, education staff, administrators — along with medical experts and community leaders,” said FEA President Fedrick Ingram. “Educators in particular are uniquely positioned to be a pivotal voice in determining what to focus on and how specific policies and practices will impact students, not just how they will impact Florida’s economy. Bringing students back onto our campuses will be successful only if parents and students know that we have put their interests first.”

FEA believes that in order to successfully reopen neighborhood public schools, we need to ensure that parents have confidence that their children will be safe and secure and that schools are focused not on providing childcare so that we can “open for business,” but on what is best for kids. The key to doing that is to include education professionals in the conversation.

The FEA called on Florida Department of Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran on April 28 to establish two inclusive committees on reopening schools. Those committees have not yet been formed. The FEA is moving ahead to get the conversation started.

### **COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE**

Members of the press are invited to attend the first and third meetings, Thursday and May 29, via Zoom. Press questions will not be taken live, but can be emailed to [joni.branch@floridaea.org](mailto:joni.branch@floridaea.org). Here is the schedule.

- **Committee on Reopening Our Neighborhood Schools**
  - 10-11 a.m. EDT Thursday, May 21 — full group, introductions and definition of scope  
*To register:* [https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wigU1XdWQ9G83TIWfOS-Vw](https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wigU1XdWQ9G83TIWfOS-Vw)
  - 10-11 a.m. EDT Tuesday, May 26 — breakout groups, discussions concentrated on defined areas
  - 10-11 a.m. EDT Friday, May 29 — full group, wrapping up  
*To register:* [https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_GKhq8k\\_XQLueCYKoXPj8xQ](https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GKhq8k_XQLueCYKoXPj8xQ)
- **Committee on Reopening Florida’s Campuses**
  - 1-2 p.m. EDT Thursday, May 21 — full group, introductions and definition of scope  
*To register:* [https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_4ksQyogrRzGd9oyYHKjNZQ](https://floridaea.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4ksQyogrRzGd9oyYHKjNZQ)
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## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Please note that the membership lists are subject to change.

- **Committee on Reopening Our Neighborhood Schools**

Chair: Fedrick Ingram, FEA president  
Andrew Spar, FEA vice-president  
Carole Gauronskas, FEA secretary/treasurer  
Jairus Williams, FAMU student and president of Student FEA  
Linda Kearschner, president of Florida PTA  
Adora Obi Nweze, NAACP state president  
State Rep. Kamia Brown  
State Sen. Janet Cruz  
Rocky Hanna, superintendent of Leon County Schools  
Rev. James T. Golden, Pastors for Florida's Children  
Liz Snowden, small business owner  
Angie Gallo, Orange County School Board member  
Rosanne Wood, Leon County School Board member  
Hannah Ard, Escambia County middle/high school science teacher  
Al Culp, Escambia County science teacher  
Sheila Watson, Leon County prek teacher  
Andrew Burk, St. Johns County teacher  
Quinetta Ryal, Collier County counselor  
Curtis Richardson, Tallahassee city commissioner  
David Richardson, Miami Beach city commissioner  
Carol Cleaver, Escambia County teacher  
Angela Callahan, Baker EA president  
Pura Scott, parent  
Suzanne Minor, M.D., FAAFP  
Johanna Lopez, executive director of Voces Unidos

- **Committee on Reopening Florida's Campuses**

Kyleigh Jackson, UCF student  
Romina Montenegro, FIU student  
Jairus Williams, FAMU student  
Adela Ghadimi, FSU graduate assistant  
Sharon LaSure-Roy, parent of UCF student  
Elizabeth Key-Raimer, HCC Chapter president, parent of FIU student  
Christina Drake, former Polytechnic trustee and faculty  
Kathleen Wilson, former FIU trustee, vice provost for faculty, UFF member  
Maria Rodriguez, executive director, Florida Immigrant Coalition  
Angie Nixon, director, FSPU-Higher Education  
Lori Shad, trustee, JASMYN  
Eric Terry, DBA, professor, School of Business, Miami-Dade College  
Deborah Ferrari, R.N., professor of Nursing, FSCJ  
Elizabeth Ramsay, M.A., president, UF-MDC  
Laura Earle, DVM, professor of Veterinary Science, EFSC  
Joseph Silver, Ph.D., adjunct professor, Biological Sciences, LSSC  
Caitlin Gille, M.S., professor of Zoology, PHSC  
Meredith Mountford, Ph.D., associate professor, Educational Leadership, FAU  
Marlene Morales, Ph.D., professor, School of Education, MDC  
Patricia Smith, M.S., adjunct professor, Biology, Seminole State  
Jaffar Ali, Ph.D., professor of Mathematics, FGCU  
Syed Zafar, M.D.  
Tiffany Parisi, MPH, CPH, community crisis and recovery expert  
Tracye Polson, Ph.D., LCSW, mental health professional

Anne Fisher, Ph.D., mental health counselor, New College  
Irene Lipof, Ed.D., vice-chair and secretary, Board of Trustees, Jackson Health System  
Leigh Wilsey, M.A., former county public health preparedness planner  
Kevin Clair, M.S., former health services administrator and public health practitioner  
Angela Strain, public health advocate  
Carlos Guillermo Smith, ranking member, House Higher Education and Career Readiness Subcommittee

## **COMMITTEE RESOURCES**

For background materials and documents issued by the two committees, please visit <https://feaweb.org/covid19/reopen/>

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*The Florida Education Association is the state's largest association of professional employees, with more than 145,000 members. FEA represents PreK-12 teachers, higher education faculty, educational staff professionals, students at our colleges and universities preparing to become teachers and retired education employees.*

*UFF is the higher education affiliate of the Florida Education Association and represents more than 14,000 full-time faculty, including those at all 12 public universities in Florida, at 15 state colleges and community colleges, and at the private Saint Leo University. UFF also represents more than 8,000 graduate assistants at four public universities in Florida.*