

PUTNAM COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS MEETING MINUTES  
April 11, 2023

Twelve PCRTA members gathered at the Putnam Inn. The meeting was called to order by President Alan Zerkel. Following the pledge, a prayer, and lunch, he introduced our speaker, Kim Fidler. Kim was a Spanish Teacher at South Putnam High School for 16 years and has been an ISTA Uniserv Director for 15 years. She is completing her PhD in education at ISU.

Kim reviewed the current proposed bills dealing with teacher retirement. HB 1008 increases the role of the state treasurer with regard to state retirement matters. ISTA opposes that bill. HB 1028 would provide the 13<sup>th</sup> check plus \$50 but there would be no COLA. ISTA supports this. HB 1001 gives traditional public schools the lowest funding increase (total of 6% per student), brick and mortar charter schools have a higher increase (total of 22.5%). Virtual charter schools have a total 22.5 % per student increase. Private school voucher schools will fund student totals of 6.9% per student. Virtual schools are currently funded at 85% and that will be increased to 100% of the foundation amount. Education Scholarship Accounts which will fund parents to home-school their children will be funded at \$10 million per year plus \$1.5 million each year to the state treasurer to administer ESAs. New career scholarship accounts will pay companies to hire students to work. Public schools instead of parents will absorb textbook costs with no extra money coming from the state to the public schools.

SB 12 was defeated and has been moved into SB 68 which says that parents can complain about library or textbooks. Schools have a choice to remove the book, place the book in an appropriate age place, or deny the complaint. The denied complaint can then be taken to the school board and the prosecutor. The teacher or librarian can be charged with a level 6 felony and, if convicted, must serve prison time. There is a poor definition of what is harmful in the bill.

Kim noted that enrollment in teacher education undergraduate and graduate programs is down in spite of teacher shortages. Many teacher preparation programs are being cut due to a lack of students.

Two students requested scholarship applications. One (Alexis Vanihel, a South Putnam graduate) emailed back that she didn't complete the application because she is a freshman, but will definitely apply next year. The committee reviewed the application of the second student (Reghan Christy, a North Putnam High School graduate) and recommended that she receive the 2022-23 PCRTA scholarship.

Virginia Summerlot won the 50/50 drawing.

The next meeting will be on May 8.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Wieland, Recording Secretary