



Messenger

<http://www.weac.org/HSEA>

A newsletter published for the education employees of the Howard-Suamico School District

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January 26, 2011

Howard-Suamico Education Association

Jason Berna
President

Dave Wickert
Vice President

Bev Schacht
Treasurer

Candice Perz
Secretary

Calendar of Events

January 31

Board of Education meeting
6 p.m., BP Forum Room

February 10

Executive Board meeting
4 p.m., UNE Office

February 14

Board of Education meeting
6 p.m., BP Forum Room

Message from the President *by Jason Berna, HSEA President*

As January and the first semester of classes come to an end, many of you may be wondering if we have made any strides in the first half of the year. As I reflect on the things that we have done, I must say it has been successful to this point. We have settled two huge conflicts for our current retirees that will have a lasting effect for future retirees as well. In the December "Linkage Meeting," members met with the HSSD School Board and they are still discussing the things that we brought to the table. Your voice has been heard. How much will change as a result of this remains to be seen, but I encourage you to keep being active and making your voice heard. During the November Parent-Teacher Conferences, we were able to create a "Good News Newsletter" that a number of people took note of. It is not our style as teachers to toot our own horn, but sometimes we need to in order to improve our standing in the community. Education is not valued by our society the way it used to be. We live in an entertainment-driven, want-results-before-I-start society. You and I know that education/knowledge is the only way that our society can continue to improve. We are the people who are in the trenches of education and we need to be the driving force in how to improve it. While some are willing to drive policy by dollars and cents, or donations, we need to stick to what works and how to help kids achieve the most. For children to succeed, we must stick together, talk about the issues that affect the classrooms, and be willing to demand the changes that help kids. We are trained professionals who in some cases are treated like kids ourselves. Keep on organizing and fighting the good fight for the children of HSSD.

With that in mind, I am going to toss out some "radical ideas" that I would like to hear some feedback on. I may bring some of those that receive the most discussion up at the next General Assembly meeting in May. These are nothing more than discussion points, they are not policy. Think in terms of helping kids learn more. How do you feel about:

- Year-round school for kids?
- Non-traditional schedules?
- Information and or Vocational Technology as a core course.
- Personal Finance, Business, or Economics as a core course.
- Limiting class sizes at the elementary schools, but seeing larger classes as kids get older (i.e. K-4 cap of 15, 5-6 cap of 20, 7-9 cap 24, 10-12 cap 30 (science labs would need to be smaller of course)). Concept is to improve on basic skills such as reading/writing; the better the kids get the easier it would be to handle larger class sizes at the upper levels.
- K-4 specialty (Math/Science teachers and LA/SS teachers swap students during the day as you do when you have the Arts or Physical Education

- classes. Prepping for fewer classes, help students excel further by using more instructional expertise).
- K-12 curriculum summits.
- PLCs used to help students in one-on-one office hours every other week.

I told you that these are radical ideas and, yes, I do like to think outside of the box once in a while. The ideas above are not really earth shattering if you think about them. They are used in other places in the world every day and have been used to move educational programs forward. If we are going to hide behind the concept that “I am making no changes in the way I work because we do not have a contract,” then we will continue to be punished by the public, businesses, and governments. Remember, we are the trained professionals. We are the ones who parents send their kids to learn from. We are the ones that have the ability to mold the hot iron how we want. If we decide as one that specific changes are needed to better a child’s education there is no way that we can’t dictate the terms of our working conditions.

Please talk to your colleagues about the “radical ideas,” research the facts on which really would be best for your age group and curriculum, and maybe create some other ideas. Don’t forget to reap the rewards of your efforts from the first half and enjoy the second half of the year.

Jason

HSEA General Assembly Meeting—January 13, 2011

Newsletter Summary

Treasurer’s Report

- Balances of accounts and a list of expenses paid were given.

President’s Report

- Board meeting report: Bay Harbor, Forest Glen, and Justin Nelson.
 - ✓ Further board meeting reports need to be copied to the secretary for archives.
 - ✓ Request for board meeting information packets; meetings are very confusing without them.
- Continue to fill out Good News cards.
- Presentation by LMS specialist on Common School Fund and the HSSD Board’s recent resolution vote to possibly use these funds for salaries of LMS personal. Board’s vote will be taken to the state school board association for a final vote. Please see an LMS for more information.
- 5-12 Grading Reform: presentation and discussion on this topic. Members feel like they are not being heard and this reform is based on only a few individual’s agenda. HSSD is contacting a school using this current reform method; suggestion is to have the HSEA contact this school’s union to have their own discussion. Lastly, many elementary teachers are unaware of this reform and are interested in learning more about it.
- January 12 meeting with Damian cancelled. Next meeting with Damian is February 9.
- Please take your issues to the building administration and building reps first. Contact those involved prior to involving building administrators if it is between members.

- If your classrooms are cold, you need to record that in School Dude. Talk to your custodian and get it worked out. It may be a computer glitch and an easy fix.
- January 20 open house; HSEA members are not required to be there. This is only for open enrollment purposes.

Committee Reports

Legislative:

- Chairpersons: Tim Mulrain.
- BLUE legislative dinner on March 7. Of interested in attending, please see Jason.
- Shared 3 articles:
 - ✓ “State given high grade for “chance for success,” low for “K-12 achievement”
The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
01/12/2011
 - ✓ Editorial: “Education changing with the times”
Green Bay Press Gazette
01/7/2011
 - ✓ Arne Duncan “School reform’s next test”
The Capital Times
01/6/2011

Political Action:

- Chairpersons: Justin Nelson and Jenny Johnston.
- HSEA t-shirts are to be worn on Tuesdays.
- Next Action Committee meeting on February 8 at 4 p.m. at Townline. Only three schools have a rep (Bay Port, Suamico, Bay Harbor). Looking for one rep per building. If

interested, please see your building rep for more information.

- Ideas from last action committee meeting to be considered:
 - ✓ Podcast to members about status of negotiations.
 - ✓ Survey monkey to ask about how members feel, what actions to take, what actions they would be willing to participate in, etc.
 - ✓ Pep rally for union.
 - ✓ Inform public on our status; contact media, send out facts sheet to public. Contacting WEAC for support on this.

Members' Rights:

- Chairpersons: Darlene Schoen and Mary Lu Sachs.
- Retirement grievance has been settled.

Public Relations:

- Chairpersons: Justin Nelson and Jenny Johnston.
- Second PR newsletter in the making. Articles needed by February 8.

Negotiations:

- Chairperson: Cathy Allen Schneider.
- Calendar vote: 8 yes and 6 no. Tentative calendar passed.
- Concerns for next calendar:
 - ✓ Need to set up committee; this should not be all Cathy's job.
 - ✓ Consider sports seasons when placing spring break.
 - ✓ Consider length of time between last break and spring break.
 - ✓ Consider moving trade off day.
- Contract negotiations update: waiting for district on whether or not they are willing to discuss further or to go to arbitration.

Retired Liaison:

- Chairperson: Lynne Glinski.
- No report.

Scholarship:

- Chairperson: Blake Bierowski.
- Look for information to come out about applying for a scholarship around spring break.

Social:

- Chairperson: Kathy Krause.
- T-shirts are in; see building rep for orders.
- Spring social is May 12 and retirement dinner is May 3, both being held at Townline.

Newsletter:

- Chairperson: Jenny Soucoup.
- Feel free to submit any stories you think would be of interest.

Web page:

- Chairperson: Joyce Tremml.
- No report.

Building Reports:

Bay Harbor:

- Building Reps: Blake Bierowski and Michele Otradovec.
- No report.

Bay Port:

- Building Reps: Blake Griesinger, Justin Nelson, Kathy Krause, and Eric Sorensen.
- Questions/major Concerns over grading reform. Staff feels that they are not being listened to even though people are asking them for their opinion.

Bay View:

- Building Reps: Kurt Prien and Mark Campbell.
- Length and number of meetings; inequity in staff attendance at these meetings. Staff feels that most of the material presented at these meetings could be conveyed through email.

Forest Glen:

- Buildings Reps: Mary Lu Sachs and Cathy Allen-Schneider.
- Temperature concerns.

Howard:

- Building Reps: Sue Tegan and Mary Berg.
- No report.

Lineville:

- Building Reps: Joyce Tremml and Deb Servais.
- Length of staff meetings: Lineville staff wanted to know if the contract limits the length of a staff meeting. Our contract does not limit time but does require attendance at the staff meeting.
- Staff is interested in participating with action committee. What can they do?

Meadowbrook:

- Building Reps: Darlene Schoen and Carrie Brunette.

- Clarification needed on part-time teachers and length of probation.
- Comp time questions/clarification.
- Clarification needed on how to access the electronic copy of our HSEA contract.

Suamico:

- Building Reps: Michelle Nigbur and Michelle Wick.
- No report.

Old Business

- Discussion on attendance at Board meetings. Buildings will be responsible for sending representatives to the School Board meetings on the dates listed: Forest Glen: January 31; Howard: February 14 and 28; Meadowbrook: March 14; Suamico: April 11 and 25; Bay Port: May 9 and 23. Building reps be sure to send out an email to all staff about attending board meetings.
- Upcoming dates for HSEA Executive Board meetings for the 2010-2011 school year are as follows:
 - ✓ February 10, March 10, April 7, May 12 (General Assembly Meeting at Townline)

Candice Perz, HSEA Secretary



Bay View:

- Over 300 students participated in fall sports at Bay View.
- Over 220 students are participating in winter sports at Bay View.
- The musical has over 140 students involved in the production.
- Over 55 students are participating in Forensics.
- Thank you to the many staff members that dedicate their time in supporting these students outside the classroom.

Howard:

- Howard staff had loads of fun at our Rock-K-Ranch Christmas party.

Lineville:

- Big Brothers/Big Sisters program is very successful.
- Battle of the Books is beginning battles in January. The district battle will be in March.

Suamico:

- Read-a-thon was a huge success! Many families participated in this event.
- Annual Sweetheart Auction is being organized by the PTO. This is a huge fundraiser for our school.

**Ask the
"Messenger"**



"Why has my net pay increased? Did we settle the contract?"

No, the contract is far from being settled. The Federal Government passed a bill during the lame duck session that affected payroll taxes. The Social Security tax rate was reduced from 6.2% to 4.2% for the employee portion only. Because of this tax rate reduction, you will see an increase in your taxable income (which means you will have an increase in federal tax deduction). Most will also more than likely see an increase in net pay.

Not only will this Social Security change affect your paycheck, it could possibly place you in a higher tax bracket. You may want to think about increasing your 403b contribution. The district form is attached. Make sure your annuity representative signs the form. The change must be made before March 15.

