



Messenger

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

Volume 9, Number 6

Message from the President *by Beverly Rittenhouse, HSEA President*

January 16, 2009

Happy New Year as we continue to finish off second quarter and gear up for final unit and/or semester exams. As staff, we know that the pressure is great for everyone as we try to measure academic growth with common assessments.

Howard-Suamico Education Association

Bev Rittenhouse
President

Dave Wickert
Vice President

Bev Schacht
Treasurer

Candice Perz
Secretary

Calendar of Events

February 12
Executive Board meeting
4 p.m., UNE Office

February 9 and 23
Board of Education meeting
6 p.m., BP Forum Room

Overall, this has been an extremely quiet past month, which I'm sure is due to an incredible winter (which has kept everyone busy digging out) and the holiday. There are a few items that we will begin to address within the next month. First, as the breakfast program continues to be implemented in another elementary school, there needs to be group of teachers and administrators, representing all buildings, which will develop one clear workable procedure to insure that all schools are operating under the same schedule. Please let your building rep know if you would like to be part of this small group that will bring clarification to this issue. Second, please make sure you understand that on January 23, you do not have to put in for comp time if the following conditions have been met: The morning is a trade off day for the three evening conferences in the fall (you must have worked the three evening conferences) and the afternoon is the pay back for the four hours of in-service that everyone is required to put in throughout the year. Please know, however, that if you have not put in your four hours by the end of the year, then after this contracted year, you will have your hourly wage deducted from your next summer paycheck, for any of the four hours that you have not completed. **Please track your in-service time through our district's My Learning Plan.** Third, the 2009-2010 calendar continues to be developed and is hopefully near completion after gathering input from all staff in each building through building reps. Thank you to all who have put in so many hours working on the Calendar Committee. Finally, we are beginning to enter into our new round of negotiations for our next two contracted years. Negotiations are not easy, even in the best of times; however I am certain, as we collaborate, that a contract will be agreed upon which reflects sincere understanding of how we respect and honor all who dedicate and work tirelessly for the students and families in this district.

As we proceed through January (and I look out at 2 feet of snow) I am positive that I will continue to enjoy the beauty of this season. I never tire of seeing the whiteness (which having grown up in Kansas, is so much better than just brown ground) of snow covered landscapes. So, please enjoy the beauty, even with all the headaches it may bring as we drive and survive.

HSEA General Assembly Meeting—January 8, 2009

Newsletter Summary

Treasurer's Report

- Savings \$275.00; Checking approximately \$14,500
- Payments made for meeting snacks

President's Report

- Sue Britz visited the meeting to talk about their negotiations.
- All items from December still pending; no action has been taken since last meeting. Next meeting with Dr. LaCroix is January 20.
 - ✓ Requesting an updated list of all those who serve in our union to be placed on webpage and in our newsletter.
 - ✓ Update on SPED task force: discussion on using PREP time to administer WKCE testing, cross-categorical programming, and schedules
 - ✓ Update on whether or not to put in for pay when PREP time is lost; only can submit for pay if you were in contact with students during your lost PREP time, not for meeting without student contact.
 - ✓ Early Release Clarification; seeking copy from Damian for more clarification.
 - ✓ Strategic Planning Committee; Michelle Wick was the HSEA representative.
 - ✓ WEAC initiative presented to board; dealing with school funding reform. Would like to get members involved to streamline communication within our district.

Committee Reports

Legislative

- UNE meet your legislator night is scheduled for March 9. Look for more details to come.

Members Rights

- Bay View working on new schedule for next year to eliminate mini preps.

Negotiations

- Calendar sub-committee met on December 14. The subcommittee will meet on January 14 to finalize our calendar proposal and will be meeting with the District team on January 22 to share that proposal.
- Negotiations team met on December 22 to work on proposal. Next meeting is January 12.
- Early retirement sub-committee met on January 4 with full team and shared issues to be considered with district.

Building Reports:

Bay Port:

- Update on in-house substituting situation.

Bay View:

- Update on procedure for January 23.
- PLC purpose: not having time to talk about curriculum and teaching strategies.

Suamico:

- Breakfast program starts Monday. How is it run in other elementary buildings? Should we have a standardized procedure through district?

Bay Harbor, Forest Glen, Howard, Lineville, Meadowbrook: No report.

Candice Perz
HSEA Secretary

Deduct Educator Expenses on Tax Form 1040

Congress has extended the tax benefit for out-of-pocket expenses; review these guidelines for help with your return:

http://neamb.com/money_articles/121508A.jsp

The NEA Foundation Goes Green with Grants!

Over the past decade, the NEA Foundation has awarded more than \$4.1 million in grants to public school educators. They are launching a web-based application process for its popular \$2,000 and \$5,000 grants, at www.neafoundation.org.

The Foundation will accept both paper and online applications for its Student Achievement Grants and its Learning and Leadership Grants through February 1, 2009, when it will convert to the web-only system.

Negotiations Update *by Cathy Allen-Schneider, Negotiations Chair*

The calendar subcommittee met in December to consider the District's calendar proposal. The District's proposal is as follows:

Tues., Aug. 25	Staff Development Day
Wed., Aug. 26	Inservice Day
Thurs., Aug. 27	Full Teacher Work Day
Tues., Sept. 1	First Student Day
Mon., Sept. 7	Labor Day - no school
Thurs., and Fri., Oct. 29-30	Teacher Convention
Wed., Nov. 5	End of First Quarter
Tues., Nov. 17	Parent Conferences PM
Thurs., Nov. 19	Parent Conferences PM
Tues., Nov. 24	Parent Conferences PM
Wed., Nov. 25	1/2 Student Day AM, 1/2 ECT PM (evening conference trade-off)
Thurs., Nov. 26	Thanksgiving
Wed., Dec. 23 - Sun., Jan. 3	Winter Break
Thurs., Jan. 21	End of 2nd Quarter
Fri., Jan. 22	1/2 ECT AM, 1/2 Inservice PM
Fri., Mar. 26	End of 3rd Quarter
Mon., Mar. 29 - Mon., Apr. 5	Easter Break (4/5 is ECT AM/PM)
Mon., May 31	Memorial Day
Tues., June 8	End of 4th Quarter/Last Student Day
Wed., June 9	Work Day AM, ECT PM

The HSEA calendar sub-committee is considering alternate dates for the fall evening conferences, Easter break, and our 1/2 workday. We are looking at fall conferences on Thurs., Nov. 19 PM, Tues., Nov. 24 PM, and Wed., Nov. 25 AM, with the PM being an ECT and Wed., Dec. 23 being a 1/2 student day AM/1/2 ECT PM. The subcommittee is also considering Easter break running from Fri., Apr. 2 through Sun., Apr. 11, with Good Friday being a full ECT day. The 1/2 workday would be placed on Fri., Jan. 22, instead of the District's proposed ECT AM, which would mean no workday at the end of the year. Ten-minute meetings should have been held in each of the buildings to get input from members on the alternate options being considered. The subcommittee will be meeting on Jan. 14 to finalize our calendar proposal and will then be meeting on Thurs., Jan. 22 with the District team to share proposals. Further information will be included in the next newsletter.

The District filed the form to open negotiations in December with the WERC. The full negotiations team met on Dec. 22 to start considering issues to explore in this next bargain. Early retirement will be the big issue on the team's plate this round. There was much discussion on this issue and others at the meeting. The team will be meeting on Mon., Jan. 12, to continue looking at issues and what to include in a proposal. Team members this round are: Tom Appel and Jenny Soucoup at BP; Candi Perz and Mary Koglin at BV; Deb Hebert at LV; Darlene Schoen at MB; Tim Carlson at BH; Anne Foley at SU; and Cathy Allen-Schneider at FG. Jason Berna and Ryan Hibbard at BP are also sitting in on this round as informal members of the team. Many thanks to

the new team members who have stepped forward to be involved in negotiations.

The OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) subcommittee met on Jan. 6. At this meeting, Dennis Eisenberg, a WEAC negotiations expert, presented possible items for the District team to consider as we move forward on the early retirement issue. Much discussion ensued and the subcommittee will be meeting again on Feb. 2 to continue the discussion. Members on this subcommittee are Tom Appel at BP, Mary Koglin at BV, and Cathy Allen-Schneider at FG, along with Sue Britz, our Uniserv director, and Dennis Eisenberg.

The next few months may be very busy ones for the team as we talk about and consider possible items to include in our proposal to the District. Please feel free to contact the negotiations team member in your building with any concerns, questions, or input, or contact me at bobcat54301@aol.com. Your input is important to us.

