



Messenger

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

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

Volume 10, Number 7

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

February 21, 2010

Howard-Suamico Education Association

Jason Berna
President

Dave Wickert
Vice President

Bev Schacht
Treasurer

Candice Perz
Secretary

Calendar of Events

February 22

Board of Education meeting
5:30 p.m., BP Forum Room

March 11

Executive Board meeting
4 p.m., UNE Office

March 8

Board of Education meeting
5:30 p.m., BP Forum Room

Winter is almost over! By the time you receive this newsletter, there will only be five weeks remaining! ☺ So what has been going on over the past four weeks you ask? More than you have time to read, so I'll try to sum it up.

On January 12, we held a successful General Assembly meeting in which well over 100 members showed up to hear about the District's proposals. I have been told that this is the largest group ever assembled, but that still does not make me satisfied. I wanted to see 100% participation, but I am a perfectionist to some degree. The feedback that members of the negotiations team and I received was positive. Those who attended found it to be "eye-opening" and "informative." That was the goal. I want you to be active and informed.

We collected around 100 pounds of food for the Giving Tree that day as well! A special thanks to all who brought food items. We will be doing this again sometime in March or April, so please keep your ears and eyes open.

Negotiations are moving ahead. Slowly yes, but why should we hurry up and make costly mistakes on our livelihoods?

- Some members are starting to question the speed at which our team is moving, but remember that they have **all** of our best interests in mind. There are some who say that "we should be meeting the District in the middle" so we can get this settled.
- My personal opinion of this is "NO," but you can let me and/or the negotiations team members know why we should change our course if you feel otherwise. I would like to hear what positive analysis there is in regards to the past two contracts.

We have been told repeatedly over the past school year, (some of you have seen presentations) that we are in need of cutting the budget once again. We will be in bad financial shape in two years; I think is the basic message. We (your negotiations team) have repeatedly asked for the actual numbers and amount needed; yet we have not received them. For those of you who have been here at HSSD long enough, you know that you cannot trust everything that comes down from above, especially financial information. Whether it was John Keller, or now Betty Zimdars, we have heard this song and dance many, many times yet I quote one of Betty Zimdars recent annual budget reports, "we are providing the best education at the lowest cost per student." By the way, she gets paid a bit more each year for reporting that. This message reminds me of a horrific historical event:

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.”

--Joseph Goebbels, Adolph Hitler's Propaganda Minister, 1933-45.

If we truly are short money, what do you think about coming up with some “creative ideas” of our own to share (short of turning the heat down more)? If you think of something, no matter how off the wall you think that it may/may not be, please write it down and send it to your building rep.

As to the “Merit Pay” issue, let’s set the record straight. I have not formally said anything about it because I am not confident that I know enough about it yet.

- Administrators (from the DO to your building) receive money at the end of the year (June 30) for meeting specific goals/standards based on evaluations. Who does the evaluations? I don’t know. Who selects the evaluators? I don’t know. However, I do know that there is not a “\$1 million Merit Pay Pot” out there, but quite frankly, we have not found exactly where the money is coming from. I was told that an administrator only receives part (i.e. 2.4% of the 3.4% increase) of the salary prior to June 30 and then they fight for part of this pool (1% of the total increase) of money by scoring better than their administrative peers. The higher you score, the larger the percentage of the “pool” that you receive.

A few quick reminders:

Please fill out your sick leave paperwork in a timely fashion. At this time, using ASEOP is not finishing the job. You still need to fill out the paperwork and give it to your building secretary/HR. James Freeman has told me that HR is working on the ability for ASEOP to complete this all in one place. We may see this in the next year or two.

Request for Personal Leave must be done **48 hours** prior to taking it. Please don’t be working on your personal travel plans at work, find your tickets and then request a personal day for tomorrow. That lacks professionalism and places undo pressures on your building principal to okay your travel plans.

If you have building issues, make sure that you are taking these to your building administration. If they are unwilling to discuss the issue with you, then get your building reps involved.

Don’t be afraid to tell others what a wonderful job they are doing every day. We need to make each other feel welcome at work.

And one last very important item; **KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!**

I tried to keep this short and still got long winded (can you get long winded typing?). Think Spring, it really is not that far away.

Jason

HSEA Executive Board Meeting—January 7, 2010 Newsletter Summary

Presentation

- Rick Schadewald presented information to the Executive Board on the retirement grievance.

Treasurer’s Report

- Total expenses for December/January: \$162; Total for year: \$8,396.99
- Checking: \$731.48; Savings: \$19,161

President’s Report

- February 3 meeting with Damian
 - Personal time issues; must put in your request 48 hours prior.
 - Remember to fill out absent paperwork in a timely manner.
 - Discussed online courses for lane advancement; suggested that anyone interested in taking a course online contact Dennis Krueger for pre-approval before registering. Make sure to have course description and syllabus. Looking for online courses that have the description of “distance education.”
 - Next meeting: March 10.
- Distribution of NEA election forms; these will be given to building reps to hand out.
- Discussed member’s survey; suggested questions given. More discussion needed.
- Good news cards given out at the beginning of the meeting so we can document positive things happening in each building.

- Next meeting: Bring ideas of how HSSD can save money.

Committee Reports

Legislative/Political Action/Public Relations

- Legislative dinner is March 1. Please contact Jason if you are interested in attending.
- T-shirt ideas: polo vs. t-shirt.
- Teacher of the month nominations needed. Nomination forms will be put in teacher's lounges so more entries can be received.
- Still looking for Action committee members at the following buildings: Forest Glen, Bay View, Lineville, and Suamico.

Negotiations

- January 12 General Assembly attended by over 100 members. Lots of positive feedback. A special thanks goes out to Keith Schroeder and Jason Berna for their help in creating the presentation.
- District/Team meeting was January 26. Shared responses to District proposal. Continued talks about early retirement.
- Team meeting held February 8.
- Next District/Team meeting is February 22.

Retired Liaison

- Presenter helped clarify retirement arbitration
- Website information needs updating, specifically the "History of the HSEA." Lynne Glinski will be heading up a committee and looking for retirees to supply the missing pieces of the puzzle.

Social

- May 4 Retirement Dinner at Townline.
- May 13 General Assembly meeting at Townline.

Members' Rights, Newsletter, Scholarship, Webpage: No report.

Building Reports:

Bay Port:

- Staff member concerned over comments made by administrator about their class being "lots of fun, no homework, no projects." This is not the image the staff member wants for their class. Suggestion is to talk to the administrator about this so clarification can be achieved.

Bay Harbor:

- Elementary staff would like to be considered for extra duty positions. How can we better communicate these opportunities to all HSSD staff?

Bay View:

- Concerned over being "strongly" encouraged to take a TRIBES class. Letter given to staff not trained requiring them to sign up for an upcoming TRIBES class outside of their contracted day.
- Staff meetings are shorter and more messages conveyed through email.

Forest Glen:

- Heating issues; very cold, kids shivering. If heat is to be set at 68, parents should be informed of this so the kids are coming to school dressed appropriately.
- Math walk throughs; staff feels they are being evaluated. Forms are in triplicate; where do the other forms go?

Howard:

- Heating issues; very cold, inconsistent throughout building.
- Positives:
 - Fund drive for Haiti raised over \$600.
 - Author in residence a success.

Lineville:

- No report.

Meadowbrook:

- Positives:
 - Scientist in residence went well.
 - Pilot visit discussing his Haiti relief mission.

Suamico:

- Design for learning presentation; lots of money spent on new technology (\$600,000+) but limited 411 accounts.
- STEM coordinator walk throughs; what is the purpose?

New Business

- Information given on merger of UNE and Bayland.

- Meeting on March 3 at 5:30 p.m. for more information on the possible merger.
- May 19 Representative Assembly at Comfort Suites. Let Jason Berna know if you are interested in attending.
- April 23-25 WEA RA in Green Bay. Let Jason Berna know if you are interested in attending.
- NEA RA in New Orleans beginning July 4. Let Jason Berna know if you are interested in attending.

Candice Perz, HSEA Secretary

Thinkfinity.org

Tens of thousands of engaging educational resources are provided on Thinkfinity.org. including lesson plans, in-class activities, educational videos, and interactive digital learning tools. Many of the resources are aligned to the Wisconsin standards.

GOOD NEWS!

Bay Harbor:

- Bay Harbor had Olympic Opening Ceremonies where each class represented a country and they will participate in different activities through the Olympic period. We will conclude with closing ceremonies. It was/is a great learning opportunity for the kids.

Bay Port:

- Todd Richardson and Dan Lewer have done a wonderful job of displaying students' art projects. Come, take a walk through Bay Port, and see the tremendous talents of our district's students.
- Teachers and students have been working together more than ever before to make our community better:
 - Ballin for Breast Cancer
 - Student School Climate Committee
 - Community Clean-up
- Academic Decathlon headed to state.

Bay View:

- Benefit for Ethan Burant is in full swing. Donate life bracelets sold. Event is February 19 at Townline.

Forest Glen:

- Student council is collecting money for Haiti. One third grader donated \$100 of his won money to the collection. Two students made necklaces sold for \$2 at the school store; all were sold.

Howard:

- Haiti collection: children brought in \$600.00 for Red Cross to use in Haiti.
- Author Katie McKy visited for four days. Her dynamic presentations inspired many children to become writers. Parent night was an opportunity for families to enjoy Katie's motivation for creative writing. Barnes and Noble night was well attended.

Meadowbrook:

- Scientist in residence January 25-28 provided great hands-on lessons for each grade level all four days. The science carnival Thursday evening was a great family event.
- On Tuesday February 9 Meadowbrook was visited by a pilot that flew supplies and doctors into Haiti. He shared pictures of what he saw first hand and answered student's questions. It helped all of us realize and understand what our money contributions mean to the people of Haiti.

Suamico:

- PTO Sweetheart Auction being held Friday February 12. Parents, principals, students, and staff have been active in this fundraising activity.

Negotiations Update by Cathy Allen-Schneider, Negotiations Chair

First of all, a HUGE thank you to all those members who were able to come to the General Assembly meeting in January. Hopefully you were able to get some questions answered regarding where things stand in negotiations. A big thank-you goes out to Keith Schroeder and Jason Berna for putting together the PowerPoint presentation!

The district and HSEA teams met on January 26 to continue negotiations. The meeting started with the HSEA responding to the Board's proposal. Much of the discussion centered on the early retirement issue. The HSEA respectfully declined the district's proposal on early retirement and asked for information on other options and parameters (what percentage/dollar amount is the district looking at reducing the benefit over how many years). The HSEA also asked for new money on the salary schedule if the district is looking for any reductions to retirement. The district's response was to ask the HSEA for clarification of their initial proposal to the insurance subcommittee and, when that was provided, responded that they were not sure where to go.

Betty Zimdars then presented a shortened version of the budget/financial situation the district could be facing in the next few years. The HSEA responded by asking what others (administrative staff, in particular) are doing to help reduce costs--changes to their retirement benefits, insurance changes, salary changes. The district's response was that everyone is taking cuts, from making changes in hiring practices for administrators to insurance changes for them to hiring teaching staff with fewer years of experience.

Additional issues that the HSEA responded to during this meeting were professional development, the health risk assessment plan, and prep time. The association respectfully declined the district's initial proposal on all three issues.

The HSEA negotiations team met on February 8 to consider how to respond to the early retirement issue, along with the other issues on the table. Dennis Eisenberg, a WEAC negotiations expert, was present to help with the discussion. The team will next meet with the district team on February 22. Team members are continuing to work hard to negotiate a fair settlement for all. Please continue to watch for future updates in this newsletter.

Win Badger basketball tickets

Here's your chance to win UW basketball tickets, and it's a great way to have some fun too! To qualify for two free tickets to the March 3 UW-Iowa game at the Kohl Center, just e-mail a picture, or series of pictures, for the [weac.org Share Your Photos](http://weac.org/Share-Your-Photos) page. It can be a photo of members participating in organizational activities or a photo of "great educational moments" from the classroom and beyond.

Read more at www.weac.org/contests

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

Using personal leave to extend a holiday or break

For those of you hoping to extend an upcoming holiday, vacation, or break by using personal leave, the following information may be helpful:

The master agreement with the Board of Education generally does not allow the use of personal leave to extend a holiday or vacation. (See lines 504-505). However, the exception is if the request is approved by the Superintendent or his designee (i.e. HR).

To use personal leave to extend a break, submit the standard leave request form to your supervisor for approval before forwarding the form to HR. Your absence form should indicate the date(s) requested; and you should check the box indicating that the leave extends a break. You are not required to provide any additional information but doing so may assist HR when deciding whether to approve the request. This is especially important if there are competing leave requests for the same day. All personal leave requests are subject to the contract's limits on the number of bargaining unit members that may be gone on personal leave at one time and the advance notice requirement (a minimum of 48 hours). For these reasons, it is recommended that you submit your personal leave request as early as possible and do not make non-refundable travel arrangements until you have received confirmation from HR that your request has been approved.

NO SCHOOL

--Friday, April 2

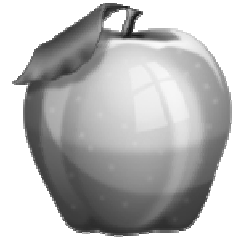
--Mon.-Fri., April 5-9

Monday, April 12

--Return to School

The best teachers teach from the heart, not from the book.
~Author Unknown

The Howard-Suamico School Education Association is inviting your nominations of teachers who deserve to be recognized!



Each month we will recognize one outstanding teacher from each of three grade levels: K-4, 5-8 and 9-12.

Anyone (students, parents, colleagues, administrators, etc.) can submit a nomination. The Teacher of the Month for each level will be recognized publically in the HSEA newsletter, recognized at his/her school, and will receive a token of appreciation from the HSEA.

For nominations please submit this form to one of your HSEA Public Relations Representatives, Justin Nelson or Jenny Johnston at BPHS



TEACHER OF THE MONTH NOMINATION FORM



Name of the teacher being nominated: _____

Name of the teacher's school: _____

Grade level taught by the teacher: K-4 5-8 9-12

Please provide a statement explaining why this teacher deserves recognition:

Your name and/or school _____

(You may remain anonymous if you so desire)