



Messenger

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

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

May 29, 2009

Howard-Suamico Education Association

Bev Rittenhouse
President

Dave Wickert
Vice President

Bev Schacht
Treasurer

Candice Perz
Secretary

May is always the month of endings and new beginnings. I know that teachers are ending academic units, giving assessments, helping some students (and their parents) in the process of transitioning into either new buildings or into college, and for some of us, ending careers of serving students and the district while looking forward to new endeavors that have long been postponed.

First, I'd like to thank everyone who attended our HSEA sponsored retirement dinner on May 5. We had a wonderful turn out of teachers, friends, and family members who all honored nine staff members that will be retiring from our district this year. It was truly a special moment for all in attendance to witness the professionalism of these dedicated teachers. They have positively impacted thousands of students and in countless ways have enriched both our school district and this community. I personally admire each of them and extend my sincerest gratitude for their lives of service.

Next, I'd like to thank the many teachers who attended our General Assembly meeting at Townline. We were able to attain a quorum and therefore we voted and passed the changes to our HSEA constitution. These changes will help us to operate in numerous procedural issues in a much more effective manner. Also, at the General Assembly meeting, we voted in the slate of new HSEA officers that will serve the next two years. The new president will be Jason Berna. He is presently teaching at Bay Port as a social studies teacher. I am very thankful that Jason stepped forward and has offered to serve all of us in this position. I will help the first few months of his term. I believe that this will help in a smooth transition between HSEA and the district administration. All other Executive Board officers and representatives remain the same and I want to thank all of them for their continued service to our organization and the district.

Last week, I met with the elementary principals and explained our hope of developing a new procedure of communication at each building. This concept stems from the idea that building issues can best be handled immediately and more effectively by the people that are most involved/best understand building issues from all viewpoints. Also, I explained to them the results/findings of the three Special Education Task Force meetings and the need for principals to team with Special Ed teachers as they address the many issues that negatively impact effective instruction/support (as it pertains to Special Ed teachers and their ability to effectively help both students and regular education teachers). Finally, it was suggested that elementary buildings meet with building staff and develop a written procedure for the breakfast program to be placed in

Calendar of Events

June 8 and 29

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

building handbooks. This will hopefully eliminate the numerous questions on supervision and time schedules that continue to surface.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for the wonderful opportunity I was given to serve these last two years as president of our association. I have enjoyed meeting so many wonderful people and helping to navigate through some extremely complicated issues with numerous individuals that are extremely talented. I believe that our union has developed a stronger relationship with administration, and that the talents within this district will continue to be utilized in new, creative solutions on the many varied issues that we currently face as educators. I wish each of you a smooth ending to this school year, as well as the hope that the summer offers blessings on all new experiences.

HSEA General Assembly Meeting—May 7, 2009

Newsletter Summary

Treasurer's Report

- Savings \$17,269.29; Checking \$1,588.05.
- List of expenditure given totaling \$12,075.32.
- Income listed and explained.
- Total paying members = 370.

Bev Schacht presented report and motion made to approve budget for next fiscal year (Schacht) and seconded (Nelson). Motion passed.

President's Report

Summary of topics addressed during 2008-2009:

- Issue of curriculum meetings during conference days.
- Issues with the PLC initiative.
- Special Education task force.
- Informal leave proposal and survey.
- Early release clarification.
- HSEA webpage.
- Continued collaboration with administration .
- New procedures to notify retirees about HSEA information.
- Revised constitution.
- Executive Board elections.
- Items that we will continue to promote next year:
 - ✓ Elementary breakfast program.
 - ✓ Building reps and administrators continued communication, possibly on a bi-weekly/monthly basis.
 - ✓ Comp time language revision.
 - ✓ Prep time language work to insure that teams can plan, especially as it is tied into RtI model.

Committee Reports

Legislation

- No report. Need chairperson.

Negotiations

- Informal leave surveys given and information received was an overwhelming “NO” to district proposal.
- Early Retirement Sub Committee: possible options shared. Looking for the district to share proposal. Regular negotiations won't start until this is completed. Next meeting Monday May 11.
- Calendar Sub Committee: presented lots of options for calendar. 2009-2010 calendar accepted.

Members Rights

- No report from chairpersons: Darlene Schoen and Mary Lu Sachs.

Public Relations

- Justin Nelson and Jenny Zoellner have volunteered to be co-chairs.

Scholarship

- Had 16 applications, 15 were granted. Monetary amount between \$20-50; one was given for \$200. Have a total of \$780 to award. Looking to increase amount and start the process earlier.
- Press release to Howard-Suamico Press with this information. Many thank you emails from parents.

New Business

1. Proposed changes to the constitution presented and motion made to accept changes (revision committee) seconded (Nelson). Motion passed.

2. HSEA officer elections:

- President: Jason Berna
- Vice-President: Dave Wickert
- Secretary: Candice Perz
- Treasurer: Bev Schacht
- Building Representatives:
 - ✓ Bay Harbor: Blake Bierowski and Tim Carlson
 - ✓ Bay Port: Eric Sorensen, Blake Griesinger, Laura Graan, and Justin Nelson
 - ✓ Bay View: Mark Campbell, Kurt Prien, and Gail Burant
 - ✓ Forest Glen: Cathy Allen-Schneider and Mary Lu Sachs
 - ✓ Howard: Margaret Sauer and Amy Bero
 - ✓ Lineville: Deb Servais, Joyce Trembl, and Julie Heim
 - ✓ Meadowbrook: Darlene Schoen and Michelle Wick
 - ✓ Suamico: Michelle Nigbur and Sue Bonn

3. Kristi Zahn is one of our UNE board members and her term will be up and she is not running again. We would like someone to take her place on the UNE Board. Interested parties please contact Kristi for more information.

Other

- Thank you card from Anne Foley for retirement gift.
- General Assembly attendance by building:
 - ✓ Bay Port (28) = 25%
 - ✓ Bay View (25) = 35%
 - ✓ Lineville (9) = 14%
 - ✓ Bay Harbor (5) = 13%
 - ✓ Forest Glen (7) = 15%
 - ✓ Howard (7) = 22%
 - ✓ Meadowbrook (3) = 8%
 - ✓ Suamico (11) = 34%
 - Total attendance: 95 members out of 370 = 26%.

Candice Perz, HSEA Secretary

Win a travel certificate

Enter to win 1 of 5 \$1,500 travel certificates at the new neamb.com

It's their belief that professionals who work as hard as we do deserve the opportunity to drop everything and just get away for a while. Enter now and you could win 1 of 5 travel certificates worth \$1,500 to do just that, sponsored by NEA Member Benefits Travel & Leisure. Winners will be notified by mail on or before June 5, 2009.

Secret extra credit

From an eighth grade math teacher in Florida:

I include extra credit problems on my quizzes and tests, but do not let the students know which problems count for extra credit. This way they do all the questions and are surprised to see that they got the extra credit problems right. Previously, students would not even try the extra credit problems because they thought they were too hard.

HSEA Scholarship Committee:

Thank you so much for the scholarship money for attending Concordia Language Villages. We appreciate the support of the HSEA in helping us broaden and enrich our children's' learning experiences.

Sincerely,

Mary Whitman

Negotiations Update by Cathy Allen-Schneider, HSEA Negotiation Chair

On April 21, the early retirement subcommittee met to continue discussions. The district presented their tentative proposal on early retirement. Basically, the district proposed a 3-tier system providing different benefits for the 3 different groups they identified. This information was shared at a full negotiations team meeting on May 11 with Sue Britz and Dennis Eisenberg, a WEAC negotiations specialist, present to help clarify the district's proposal. After much discussion, the team voted unanimously to reject the district's proposal and to suspend any further meetings of the early retirement subcommittee, feeling that any further meetings would be unproductive. At this time, the district and the HSEA are quite far apart in terms of how each feels the early retirement issue should be addressed. This issue will be discussed further during regular negotiations.

The school board has also asked to have the HSEA present a tentative proposal to the district on or before May 29 of this year. This was also discussed at the team meeting and it was decided that the team will not be ready to present a proposal until early next school year. With summer coming up and only a few weeks remaining in the '08-'09 school year, it was felt there was not enough time to prepare a proposal that would adequately reflect any issues members might have. In this respect, a short survey will be coming out, asking for members' input on issues they'd like to have included in a proposal. Please take a few minutes to fill this out and return to your building or negotiation reps. A question will also be on the survey asking if you'd prefer any future surveys to be done on Survey Monkey or continue as paper copies. Please make sure to indicate your preference. Thanks!

It's been an interesting, and somewhat quiet, year for the negotiations team this year. My thanks go out to all the team members who have given their time and input this year: Tom Appel and Jenny Soucoup at Bay Port; Mary Koglin and Candi Perz at Bay View; Deb Hebert at Lineville; Darlene Schoen at Meadowbrook; Tim Carlson at Bay Harbor; and Anne Foley at Suamico. Thanks also to Jason Berna and Ryan Hibbard from Bay Port for sitting in this year to learn more about negotiations. I truly appreciate all of you! Have a wonderful and relaxing summer!

Summer fun discounts

Noah's Ark waterpark, Wisconsin Dells

Discount passes for Noah's Ark, America's largest waterpark, are available again this summer. The all-day, unlimited passes are \$25, including tax, and are available at www.noahsarkwaterpark.com. The Day Pass purchased with your Redeem Code is the best discount available for everyone ages 3 and up and senior citizens. For online ordering instructions go to: http://www.weac.org/Member_Benefits/Special_Discounts.aspx

American Players Theatre

The American Players Theatre in Spring Green holds Educator Nights Performances throughout the summer. Tickets are \$19. You can order online at www.playinthewoods.org. If you have any questions, call the APT box office at 608-588-2361. The discounted performances are:

- June 19, The Winter's Tale
- June 30, The Philanderer
- July 15, The Comedy of Errors
- July 23, In Acting Shakespeare
- July 31, Hay Fever
- August 8, Old Times
- August 12, King Henry V
- August 25, Long Day's Journey Into Night

Brewers' Ticket Discounts

And don't forget to check the weac.org [Savers' Club](#), which includes deals on Milwaukee Brewers tickets, some of which are being offered for half of their face value.

Mercy Moments

From a teacher in North Carolina:

I don't give true extra credit. I give each student two Mercy Moments at the beginning of the semester. These gifts can be used as a pass to turn in an assignment one day late with no penalty or as a pass to retake a test or quiz. If students never need to use them, they trade them in at the end of the semester for points on low test grades or as a pass to not complete exam review (only if exempt from final exam). Students love the Mercy Moments; they have a little cushion if they need it, but they also have an incentive to try not to use them. This program is also good leverage with parents. When they ask if I give extra credit, I explain the concept of the Mercy Moment.