

Mikulis, Sigaty Win Board Seats



Ed Nawrocki, science teacher at Oakland Mills HS awaits voters at Howard HS.

With strong HCEA support, Diane Mikulis and Mary Kay Sigaty were elected to the Howard County Board of Education on November 2nd. HCEA provided thousands of “apple ballots” and voters saw HCEA members in “Teachers Do their Homework” t-shirts at polling places around the county.



Nancy Terrill, music teacher at Longfellow ES, passes out “apple ballots” with Erin Schaefer, a senior at Archbishop Spaulding HS.

Workload Still a Top Issue

No matter why the meeting is called, if it’s scheduled during planning time or after the work day, the contract is clear. During preparation time teachers “will not be assigned to any other duties.” “Attendance at all other assignments or meetings other than during the regular work day will be at the option of the individual teacher.” One monthly faculty meeting may extend one half hour beyond the work day. Staff have the right to a duty-free lunch. Federal law requires that support professionals be paid for the time they work beyond the contractual work day.

In June 2003 the Board of Education’s Committee on Workload, Planning Time and Assessments recommended the system “ensure that school-based administrators adhere to contractually negotiated planning times, duty-free lunches, and the length of the teacher workday.” HCEA grievances upheld contract language. Why, then, are meetings still being scheduled during planning time and after the work day?

It’s only natural. Everyone is looking for ways to accomplish school system goals without additional personnel or time resources, to do more with less. Educators feel pressure – from supervisors and because of their own commitment and dedication. Too many tell themselves, “I have to do it for the students,” while they neglect their own personal, professional and family needs.

Standing Up For Ourselves and Our Students

In February 2003, the HCEA Rep Council called for a workload taskforce and HCEA is still fighting for a workable system that respects educators’ time and provides the resources required to meet student needs. HCEA members are on the front line in that battle. Their response to meeting requests that violate the contract will determine whether it is won or lost.

Classroom educators have a choice. They can choose to solve the problem of when to meet, when to train, when to collaborate by sacrificing their own valuable time and allowing the contract to be violated. However, when this happens, the system doesn’t have to confront the problem and it doesn’t get addressed.

There is another choice. Educators can speak up and speak for themselves individually and through HCEA. (See box on page 6.) Whether you choose to attend a meeting scheduled in violation of the contract or not, let HCEA know that the meeting is happening. Do it for the students and for yourself.

Inside:

“Your Voice” – Your Contract	page 2
ArtSpace Opens	page 3
National Board Reception	page 4
Computer Caution	page 5
ParaPro Assessment	page 5
Student Assistant Day	page 6
NEA Wins Tax Break	page 6
New BJ’s Discount	page 6

Your Voice

by Joe Staub,
HCEA
President

“Negotiating doesn’t guarantee we get what we ask for, but it does raise important issues and sets the stage for the future.”

Negotiating Your Next Contract

HCEA had barely finished celebrating full funding for this last year of our current contract, when we began preparing to negotiate your next contract. Actual negotiating should begin in December, but the process began last May with our HCEA contract surveys.

HCEA members sent in more than one hundred contract change proposals. Teacher and ESP contract committees analyzed them in terms of impact on HCEA members and in the light of bargaining history. They prepared recommendations for the HCEA negotiating teams. HCEA teams will meet with Board of Education teams many times over the coming months to reach a “tentative agreement” on contract language and salary scales.

Improving salaries and maintaining health care benefits are major issues for all HCEA members. Previous contracts and ESP salary reclassification made HCPSS salaries much more competitive in the last five years. We want to continue this trend, but we also have to address a significant increase in health care costs. Maintaining the current 90-10 split of premium payments is a priority for both negotiating teams.

Not surprisingly, workload issues topped the list of teacher concerns. The teacher team discussed many possibilities for addressing increased demands on teacher time. Among them are providing additional time or compensation for teachers required to complete quarterly assessments, analyze and record student data, and complete student support plans.

Members pointed out the need for stipends for related arts team leaders, compensation for intramural and club sponsors, health care coverage for



Joe Staub joins members of the HCEA’s negotiating teams at the MSTA Collective Bargaining Conference in September. Pictured are (l-r) Joe, Barbara Wolniak, Dan Collins, Nellie Hill, Ann DeLacy, Dean Sheridan, Colleen Morris, Donna Schulze and Lauri Hornicek. Barbara, Donna and Lynn Egan, Debra Rambo, Teri Dennison and Estelle King (who are not pictured) are on the ESP team. Nellie, Ann, Dean, Colleen, Lauri and Ron Reis (not pictured) are on the teacher team. Dan is ESP chief negotiator; Marius Ambrose is teacher chief negotiator.

domestic partners, and the extension of paid holidays to all hourly employees. Many of these proposals have been ‘on the table’ during the 15 years I’ve been involved in negotiations. While we understand the need for and logic of our requests, many don’t make it to the end of the difficult process of getting Board of Education agreement. Negotiating doesn’t guarantee we get what we ask for, but it does raise important issues and sets the stage for the future.

HCEA will provide updates during negotiations. (They can’t be too specific until negotiations have concluded or reached an impasse.) External factors—like the county and state budget processes—have an impact on discussions and we’ll be asking you to support the fight for school funding. The final decision on all changes in the contract will be made by a vote of HCEA members.

The teacher and ESP contracts are **your** contracts, in every sense of the word. They define your obligations and rights as an employee. Your input about problems and concerns at school become the basis for contract improvements. You have an opportunity to serve on the teacher or ESP Contract Committees and/or one of the Negotiating Teams. You and the entire HCEA membership approve that agreement. Then you protect the rights established in it through the grievance process — with HCEA and MSTA UniServ staff support.

Watch for HCEA Magnets

All HCEA members will receive HCEA "Apple Magnets" in November as part of HCEA's efforts to stay in touch with its members. The magnets have HCEA's phone number and web site on them. In addition to office staff and the web site, HCEA *Works*, HCEA *Marketplace*, HCEA bulletin board posters and group mailings for special events also keep members

informed. *News & Notes*, a summary of HCEA Rep Council meetings, is available through HCEA Reps after Rep Council meetings. The HCEA *Bulletin* will keep members informed about contract negotiations.



The HCEA Board of Directors enthusiastically welcomed new members this fall, with HCEA totes and MSTA/HCEA information packets. Left to right are Nellie Hill, Joe Staub, Cheryl White, Estelle King, Kathy Nawrocki, Ann DeLacy, Greg Smith, Donna Schulze, Lynn Egan, Fannie Avery and John Eckstrom.



Health Assistant Wins Big

Holly Joy Nuse, Health Assistant at Pointers Run Elementary School and a new HCEA member this year, won the largest of three furry bears given away in a raffle for new HCEA members in August. HCEA *Works* editor Marilyn Hunter delivered her prize.

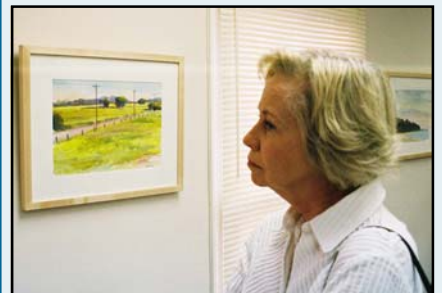


Special Educator is MVP

MSTA recognized the state's "Most Valuable Players" in membership promotion at the MSTA Convention in October. HCEA is proud of Veeda Gaines, a special educator at Steven's Forest ES and member of HCEA's Membership Committee, who received the award for Howard County.

ArtSpace Opens to High Praise

HCEA members and friends enjoyed a fantastic evening at the first ever HCEA ArtSpace Opening and Reception on October 1st. Works of Judith Fulmer, teacher at Hollifield Station ES (left below) are being featured through December. More pictures are available on the HCEA web site. HCEA would like to show other members' work in the winter and spring. Contact HCEA for more information.



NBC Reception November 18th

At right, Valeria Arch of Allegany County shares her Association's experience in promoting National Board Certification with HCPSS teachers in 2003.

HCEA would like to see more National Board Certified teachers in the HCPSS ranks and would like to see their contributions appreciated more. As part of this effort, the Association will hold its second annual National Board Certification Reception on Thursday, November 18th from 4-5:30 PM at the HCEA office. National Board Certified teachers will be honored – and will share their experience and knowledge about the certification process. All HCEA members are invited. *Please RSVP by November 16th.*



Crab Shirts Available

“Crabby and Proud of It” denim shirts are available in blue (sizes s/m) and cream (larger sizes). Shirts are \$25, \$30 for sizes 3xl and 4xl. Call HCEA to order.

Extra Cash for the Holidays

Sign-Up a new HCEA member by December 20th and HCEA will send you a \$25 Columbia Mall gift certificate. Every member who has signed up a colleague in November and December will be entered into a special drawing.



A Dollar Makes a Difference

One election's past. Now it's time to think about 2006. In 2006 Howard County residents will elect a new County Executive and all five members of the County Council! The outcome will affect teachers and education support professionals where it counts most—in your checkbook. Candidates elected in two years will set the county budget

and provide funding for the Board of Education. You can make a difference in that outcome now. As little as a dollar a pay (\$20 a year) to the Fund for Children and Public Education will give HCEA the financial resources to support and elect candidates who support public education and public education employees. Fill in the form below and send it by Pony to “HCEA.” Remember, Election 2006 is only 23 months away!

Fund for Children and Public Education - Payroll Deduction Authorization

The HCEA/MSTA/NEA Fund for Children and Public Education is a voluntary Political Action Committee which supports pro-education candidates for public office. HCEA does not use any dues money to support candidates. Deductions for the Fund are made twenty (20) times during the school year. Participation in the Fund is voluntary and continuous unless revoked in writing prior to September 1 of each new school year.

I hereby authorize the following deduction from my paycheck for the Fund for Children & Public Education (check one):

- \$1.00
 \$1.50
 \$2.00
 \$2.50
 \$5.00
 Other: \$ _____ amount

Print Name: _____
 First Name Middle Initial/Name Last Name

Signature _____ Date _____

HCEA Member Counselor Honored

HCEA congratulates member Ingrid Morton (Altholton HS), recently named Maryland State High School Counselor of the Year by the Maryland School Counselor Association. *Works* asked Mrs. Morton what her Association membership means to her. "It's an automatic thing I do," she said. "It provides security to know it's there if something comes up – and, of course, it fights for what we need."



New Teachers Can Do It!

The first year is the toughest – and HCEA is doing everything it can to support our newest colleagues. HCEA members John Eckstrom (Folly Quarter MS, shown in picture) and Brian Donoughe (Murray Hill MS) facilitated a six-hour workshop on classroom management skills called "I Can Do It!" at the HCEA office in October.

We honor our

Extra Special People

- the Education Support Professionals of the Howard County Public Schools - on November 17th, National ESP Day.

We appreciate everything you do to keep our schools running smoothly and to help educate the future of our country.

Whose Computer is This?

Computers and e-mail are right up there with books, pen and paper and the phone as tools of our profession. The fact that our work computers are the property of our employer raises the need for a word of caution. The courts have made it clear that employees have no right to privacy on the employer's computers or networks. The e-mail you send, the sites you visit, the material you download, remember: the records of all such activity are open to scrutiny by the school system. No need for paranoia ... perhaps just a bit of professional reflection.

ParaPro Workshops Continue



HCPSS HR staff Lois Witte (standing left) joins in a workshop presented by Cheryl McLeod of HCEA/MSTA staff (standing right).

HCEA Instructional Assistant members can take advantage of a series of workshops to prepare for the ParaPro Assessment test. (The test is required of IA's in Title One schools who don't have 48 hours of post-secondary education.) The test will be given at Oakland Mills HS in January, March and April 2005. An introductory workshop, a math review and a reading/writing review will be presented at the HCEA office prior to the January test date. Practice and registration booklets are available from HCEA.

HCEA I.A. Leads State Fight



Donna Schulze, Phelps Luck ES instructional assistant and HCEA Board of Directors member, speaks at the MST A RA on her proposal to make MST A's name more inclusive.

Donna Schulze cares about inclusion – for students and for educators. That is why she submitted a proposed bylaw change at the recent MST A Representative Assembly. Donna proposed that MST A change its name to the "Maryland State Education Association," to reflect the growing number of Education Support Professionals (ESP) who are MST A members. In response, MST A has set up a workgroup to examine the question and will include questions about the name change in the annual MST A member survey. Great work, Donna!

Dates to Remember:

Please RSVP to HCEA for the events below.

Preparing for Parent Conferences

Tuesday, November 16
4-5:30 PM, HCEA office
Snacks

Please RSVP by Friday, November 12th

National Education Support Professionals Day

Wednesday, November 17

National Board Certification Reception

Honoring Board Certified members
All members invited to learn about the process.

Thursday, November 18
4-5:30 PM, HCEA office

Light Refreshments
Please RSVP by Friday, November 12th

NEA Wins You a Tax Break

Thanks to NEA lobbying, teacher' and paraprofessionals will get a \$250 federal tax deduction for out-of-pocket classroom expenses again in 2004 and 2005. The tax break that acknowledged for the first time that educators spend their own money to equip their classrooms expired at the end of 2003. NEA wants to make the tax break permanent and include professional development expenses. MSTA supports similar state legislation, which failed in the Maryland General Assembly last year. Educators typically spend about \$800 dollars of their own money for classroom supplies each year, according to MSTA's last member survey.

New Teachers See the Importance of Politics

A high percentage of new teachers joining HCEA during New Teacher Orientation signed up to contribute a small amount each pay to support the Fund for Children and Public Education. HCEA does not use any member dues for political action/candidate

Tackling Workload

What you can say:

(see article page 1)

“Sorry. This is my duty-free lunch.”

Teacher: “Under the contract, I can't be required to work after my work day or meet during planning time. I will do it if I am ordered to, and can then file a grievance.”

ESP: “My work day ends at [time]. I'll stay to do the work on approved overtime if I'm directed to.”

Some Workload History

HCEA's years-long struggle over workload issues is reflected in past issues of HCEA *Works*. Find them and the recommendations of the Board of Education's Committee on Workload, Planning Time and Assessments at www.hceanea.org/publications.

New BJ's Discount for HCEA Members

HCEA is happy to announce that it is again offering a special \$25 BJ's Wholesale Club discount card. The card is valid for 15 months. This promotion – the best BJ's has ever offered – is available to new and renewing BJ's members. HCEA members who wish to take advantage of this offer will find an application on the HCEA web site. Call HCEA for more information.

support. Efforts to help elect friends of education is supported by voluntary member contributions to the Fund for Children and Public Education. Your \$2-\$5 a month can make a big difference. You can sign up to contribute on Page 4.

“The role of the teacher remains the highest calling of a free people.”

- Shirley Hufstедler

Longer Day, More Pay

Student Assistants Affected

Student Assistants work one-on-one with students with special needs. The HCEA ESP negotiated agreement defines their workday: “6½ hours plus a 30 minute unpaid duty-free lunch.” The School Board added fifteen minutes to the middle and high school student day last May. If a supervisor doesn't arrange to have the extra time covered by another employee, this adds fifteen minutes to a Student Assistant's day. HCEA has spoken with the Superintendent and he has agreed that, under federal law, this time must be paid. Student Assistants who have worked beyond their regular 6½ hour day should document their hours and watch for information from HCEA about how to collect if any wages are owed them.


Howard County
Education Association

5082 Dorsey Hall Drive, Suite 102
Ellicott City, MD 21042
410/997-3440
www.hceanea.org
editor_works@hceanea.org

President	Joe Staub
Vice President	Ann DeLacy
Treasurer	Nellie Hill
Secretary	Estelle King
Editor	Marilyn Hunter
Design	Carol Riley