

Election Advances New Leaders

Ann DeLacy, a Family and Consumer Science teacher at Mt. Hebron HS, was elected to serve as HCEA president for a two-year term beginning on July 1, 2005. Ann is the first African-American female to hold this office. In another milestone for HCEA, Instructional Assistant Donna Schulze was elected vice-president. Donna, a long-time HCEA activist, is the first Education Support Professional to be elected vice-president of HCEA.

Along with the newly-elected officers pictured, HCEA members chose delegates to the 2005 NEA and MST A Conventions. Eleven HCEA members were elected in statewide voting to serve as state delegates to the NEA Convention in July 2005. (State delegates to the NEA Convention are noted in bold in the box on page 2.)



Newly-elected HCEA President Ann Delacy (second from right) poses with (l-r) Colleen Morris, Donna Schulze and Joe Staub (elected secretary, vice-president and treasurer respectively) and Reps Paula Rivers (WLHS) and Bridget Jones (PVMS) after the March Rep Council meeting.



Press Conference - From left, ESP Chief Negotiator Dan Collins, Board of Education President Courtney Watson, Superintendent Sydney Cousin, HCEA President Joe Staub, Teacher Chief Negotiator Marius Ambrose and Teacher Negotiation Team Chair Colleen Morris participate in the press conference announcing tentative agreement in negotiations.

HCEA Concludes Successful Negotiations

HCEA teacher and ESP members voted in late March and early April on their contract agreements with the Board of Education. Substantial salary increases for the next two years put both teachers and ESPs at or near the top of salary scales in Maryland. The new agreements also contain language changes that benefit all unit members.

Members received a complete report prior to voting. Highlights are included in a special supplement to this issue for non-members. HCEA hopes those who have not joined yet will take advantage of the Early Enrollment program to join and support the organization that represents them so ably.

There is Strength in Unity. Join Now!

The greater our numbers, the greater is our collective voice! Talk to your rep or look for membership details and applications on the HCEA web site.

**Sign up a colleague.
\$50 Spring Incentive!**

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Your Voice

by Joe Staub,
HCEA
President

Changes we've made

When I began this column six years ago as HCEA President, I used it to share some of the presentations I made on your behalf to the school system, county and state leaders. As my six years as president draw to a close,

it's a time for both looking back and looking forward.

The last six years have seen tremendous change in the school system and the Association. More than half of all HCPSS employees and more than half of all HCEA members were hired since I took office on July 1, 1999! HCEA

membership has grown by nearly forty percent. We have added new employee groups: Administrative, Management & Technical employees, nurses, interpreters and cafeteria employees. HCEA has grown in numbers. HCEA's ESP membership is up 87% since 1999. We've still got work to do to encourage all employees who benefit from HCEA's work to join the Association or pay a "fair share" fee for those services.

HCEA has made important strides in improving both teacher and ESP salaries. A teacher hired on Step 1 on July 1, 1999 earns 56% more today, an Instructional Assistant 62%. HCEA's successful campaign to secure funding for ESP reclassification is perhaps the proudest achievement of my presidency. HCEA has been successful in securing guarantees for funding of negotiated agreements and in retaining the 90%-10% split for Board payment of health insurance.

These gains have come largely as a result of HCEA's increased political activism. In 1998, and again in 2002, we helped elect a County Executive and County Council who support Howard County's public schools and school employees. Board of Education members elected with HCEA support have been receptive to Association and member issues and concerns.

There is no better example of the collective power that comes from organized union activity than the departure of former Superintendent John O'Rourke. When he refused to listen to teacher concerns about increased workload, HCEA requested that the Board of Education form the Committee on Workload, Planning Time and Assessments. You expressed your lack of confidence in O'Rourke's leadership in HCEA's annual Job Satisfaction Survey. Your speaking out led the Board to reassess O'Rourke's contract and eventually to remove him as Superintendent.

In my next (and final) column, I want to address some areas where we've still got more work to do to achieve Association goals. Serving HCEA's membership as a leader and spokesperson has been challenging and rewarding, both personally and professionally. I look forward to continuing in a supportive role alongside your newly-elected leadership.



Read Across America – Joe Staub reads to students at Swansfield ES.

“We’ve still got work to do...”

HCEA Convention Delegates

Melissa Berger (FRC), **Louis T. Brzezinski** (HCMS), **Judith Cephas** (PVMS), **Ann DeLacy** (MHHS), **Brian Donoughe** (MHMS), **John Eckstrom** (FQMS), **Lynn Egan** (DRES), **Nellie Hill** (LKMS), **Lauri Hornicek** (MWES), **Hugo Jackson** (LKMS), **Belinda King** (CS), **Estelle King** (HowHS), **Janet Lindenmayer** (OMHS), **Wanda Muir-Oliver** (AHS), **Debra Rambo** (PVMS), **Ann Ridgeway** (H&H), **Chuck Ridgeway** (H&H), **Maxine Salah** (WavES), **Joe Staub** (President), **Laura Valente** (LisES), **Herbert West** (WLHS), **Cherryl White** (IES) were elected as delegates to both the NEA and MSTA Conventions. **Georgianne McNeirney** (DMS) and **Donna Schulze** (PLES) will serve as MSTA Convention delegates and **Yvonne Blount** (WLHS) as an NEA Convention delegate.

MSTA Elects New Treasurer

HCEA President Joe Staub narrowly lost his bid for election as MSTA treasurer in one of the closest races in MSTA history. The final margin of victory for Phyllis Parks-Robinson, former Montgomery County Education Association president, was only 154 votes. “Running against a very qualified candidate from a large county was an uphill battle,” Joe commented, “and I’m extremely pleased by the support I received from members throughout the state.”



ParaPro Success - Rachel Hendrick and Edie Whitehead, IAs at Laurel Woods ES, celebrate their excellent scores on the ParaPro Assessment Test.

IAs Do Well On Test

“HCEA’s workshops gave me the confidence I needed to do well on the test,” said Longfellow ES Special Ed IA Pam Coates. An IA who achieves a score of 455 or higher should send a copy of test results to Lois Witte in Human Resources. HCEA will provide test preparation, content and practice sessions prior to the June 11th ParaPro Assessment test date. Contact HCEA for more information.

National Board Certification Deadline Nears

HCEA has successfully negotiated an increase in the stipend for National Board Certified teachers. Our members tell us this is the most challenging, but most rewarding experience in their teaching careers.

HCPSS will hold an information session at 4 PM on April 13th at Faulkner Ridge. Candidate applications for financial support are due to HCPSS on May 6th. Find out more about National Board Certification and apply online through a link on the HCEA web site.

www.hceanea.org

Board Supports Fair Share; Republicans Kill Bill

In early February, the Howard County Board of Education unanimously supported HCEA’s latest effort to pass Agency Fee legislation in Annapolis. The vote came after more than an hour of discussion between the Board, HCEA President Joe Staub and a member of HCPSS administration who spoke in opposition.

HCEA’s effort was defeated in the local delegation to the Maryland General Assembly in spite of the Board’s support and HCEA testimony in an extensive hearing. (A local bill must receive support from both local House and Senate delegations in order to move toward legislation.)

Howard County delegates voted 6 to 2 in support of the bill in the House. Two of three county senators voted against the bill, effectively killing it for this year. After speaking of her efforts to secure similar legislation when she was a leader of her teachers union in New York in the 1970’s, Senator Sandra Schrader cast the deciding vote against the bill. As in two previous efforts, Democrats supported the bill and Republicans opposed it.

HCEA will continue its efforts to assure that all employees are paying their fair share of the cost of winning better salaries and working conditions



Agency Fee Briefing - HCEA President Joe Staub briefed both the Howard County Board of Education and the county senators and delegates on Agency Fee. Among his support at the Board of Education meeting were (l-r) Dan Collins (MSTA UniServ Director) and HCEA board members Donna Schulze and Estelle King.

for Howard County educators. **The 2006 election will give HCEA members a chance to elect representatives who support fairness in union representation.**

What is Agency Fee?

State law requires HCEA to represent non-members as well as members in negotiations and contract enforcement. “Fair Share” or “Agency Fee” is a charge for the cost of this representation paid by employees who choose not to pay union dues. In Maryland, legislation is needed to allow a local education association to negotiate such a fee.

Sandra French Makes Generous Contribution to HCEA’s Help-A-Child Fund

Sandra French ended twelve years of service on the Howard County Board of Education in December. Continuing a life-long commitment to children, Mrs. French donated gifts made in her honor to HCEA’s Help-A-Child fund. HCEA members wish Mrs. French all the best for the future. We offer, too, a heart-felt “Thanks!” on behalf of the Howard County students who will benefit from her generous gift to the Help-A-Child Fund. Find out more about “Help-A-Child” on the HCEA web site.

Dates to Remember:

Please RSVP to HCEA for the events below.

HCEA ArtSpace Exhibit

March 21 – May 20
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM or by appointment

HCEA Web Site Contest

April 11– May 26

HCPSS Information Session on National Board Certification

Wednesday, April 13, 4 PM
Faulkner Ridge Center

Fund for Children & Public Education

Thursday, April 14
Phone calls begin for voluntary contributions. A buck or two a pay-check helps elect friends of education.

Fifth Annual ESP Picnic

Friday, May 6, 11 AM – 2 PM
(Long lunch-hour is available.)
Cedar Lane Park
Members and Non-Members Invited!

National School Nurse Day

Wednesday, May 11

ParaPro Assessment Preparation Workshops

Monday, May 23 – Math
Tuesday, May 24 – Reading/Writing
4 – 5:30 PM, HCEA Office
Tuesday, June 7 – Practice Test
4 – 6 PM, Location TBA

Rep Appreciation Dinner

Wednesday, June 1

HCEA Retiree Reception

Thursday, June 9

MSTA PRAXIS I WORKSHOPS

Friday, May 20, 5:30 PM–7:30 PM
Writing Workshop

Saturday May 21, 10 AM–3 PM
Math Workshop

PGCEA, Forestville, MD
(Assistance with PRAXIS I only)
Call 301-736-2700 for information.

HCEA Members Attend NEA-ESP Conference

With over 900 participants, the annual NEA-ESP Conference is the second largest NEA-sponsored event. The five days of workshops, hearings and leadership training programs took place this March in San Diego.

First time conference attendees Maxine Salah and Teri Dennison found the sessions challenging and enjoyable. Maxine ran for “president” of the Emerging Leaders Workshop. This mock-election was a chance to learn the basics of Association politics. “I learned a great deal about how the Association operates,” Maxine commented. “The Conference was a wonderful learning experience, a great opportunity for sharing and networking.”

Teri will be using the training she received next year as a member of HCEA’s Instructional and Professional Development Committee. HCEA Secretary Estelle King and Board of Directors member Lynn Egan also



NEA ESP Workshop – Co-facilitator Donna Schulze chats with a participant in her workshop.

attended the conference.

ESP Organizing Committee Chair Donna Schulze and HCEA President Joe Staub, presented a workshop on “The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Membership Recruiters” to over eighty participants in two packed sessions. One participant characterized the workshop as “full of practical ideas that I can take back to my local and use tomorrow!”

Board of Education Adds Cafeteria Workers to ESP Bargaining Unit

Seventy-three percent of HCPSS food services employees who attended a meeting on the issue in January voted to request representation by HCEA. As a result, the Howard County Board of Education placed cafeteria workers into the HCEA-ESP bargaining unit.

HCEA will now be able to negotiate contract provisions for about 150 Food/Nutrition Service Assistants that will be included in the new HCEA-ESP contract which becomes effective July 1, 2005.

HCEA President Joe Staub and UniServ Director Dan Collins will be meeting with food services employees during April to seek input for contract negotiations.

We ask all HCEA members to join us in welcoming our newest employee group to the HCEA family! We invite our newest unit members to join HCEA.


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Early Enrollment: Add Your Voice to Ours!

HCEA speaks for all Howard County Educators to improve salaries and working conditions. Your membership adds strength to HCEA's advocacy. Sign up for HCEA/MSTA Early Enrollment now. Enjoy many member benefits immediately and pay no dues until September 2005.

When you sign up, NEA's Million Dollar liability insurance benefit takes immediate effect. New members also have the benefit of HCEA advice and assistance. This support is not available to non-members. New members have immediate access to NEA's car rental, credit card, magazine and personal (auto, home, life, etc.) insurance programs and will receive HCEA and MSTA publications.

Early Enrollment members are not eligible for legal assistance from MSTA until September 2005. If you are a new member and want full legal coverage, fill out a regular HCEA enrollment form and begin pro-rated dues deductions now. If you're not yet supporting your professional Association's goals, now is the time to step forward. SIGN UP TODAY! Just fill in the application on the reverse and send it to HCEA via the PONY.

Negotiating for All

HCEA has done its work.

HCEA has negotiated the best salary and working conditions for all Howard County teachers and ESPs regardless of membership status.

"It is now time for those non-members who have been putting aside their membership applications to join forces with current members." — Colleen Morris, Teacher Negotiation Team chairperson.



Making News – HCEA President Joe Stanb answers questions from television reporters about the tentative agreements.

"You can make us an even stronger force to be reckoned with in future years," – Donna Schulze, ESP Negotiation Team chairperson.

Now is the time to join HCEA!

Gains Put Howard ESPs On Top

Donna Schulze, Chair, ESP Negotiation Team

In 2005-2006, Howard County Educational Support Professional (ESP) pay will be at or near the top of the salary scales in the state of Maryland. This achievement is the result of this year's negotiations and the past two years' salary increases and reclassification.

Prior to gains negotiated in 2002, Howard County ESP salaries ranked next-to-last among six surrounding counties. That prior standing was even lower when compared with state-wide salaries. In addition to significant salary increases, which mean thousands of dollars a year for many ESPs, HCEA has negotiated contract language that is now among the very best in the state.

Much of the thanks for these gains goes to the ESP Negotiation Team who spent countless hours working on ESPs' behalf. They are Donna Schulze, Chairperson (Phelps Luck ES), Estelle King (Howard HS), Barbara Wolniak (Bellow Springs ES), Lynn Egan (Deep Run ES), Teri Dennison (Central Office), and Debra Rambo (Patuxent Valley ES), along with Chief Negotiator, Dan Collins (MSTA/HCEA Uniserv Director).

Teachers Make Progress

Colleen Morris, Chair, Teacher Negotiation Team

HCEA is pleased with the new two-year contract and the substantial increase in benefits we were able to obtain for teachers. More than 75 changes in language were recommended by the contract committee and presented by the negotiating team. Significant gains were made toward many of these requests both in and outside of the contract. (Learn more on the HCEA web site.) In addition, Superintendent Cousin acknowledged HCEA's long-standing requests by adding funds to the budget for additional instructional team leader (ITL) positions and time for Athletic Directors.

HCEA was successful in preventing the Board of Education from implementing requests that would have lengthened staff meeting times and made after-school ITL meetings mandatory. HCEA rejected Board attempts to place restrictions on how planning time is used.

HCEA will continue to protect its teachers through every available venue and to ensure that members' concerns are heard and addressed. We haven't yet won firm contract language to resolve the workload issue. HCEA will continue to address increased workload and to prepare for raising workload issues in future contract negotiations.



Early Enrollment Spring Promotion

Membership Application

HOWARD COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

RETURN APPLICATION TO
HCEA

SSN			LOCAL ASSOCIATION HOWARD COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
MR. <input type="checkbox"/> MISS <input type="checkbox"/> DR. <input type="checkbox"/>	FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST
MRS. <input type="checkbox"/> MS. <input type="checkbox"/>			
ADDRESS			
CITY		STATE	ZIP CODE
WORK LOCATION		HOME PHONE	E-MAIL

The following information is REQUIRED:

Have you been a member of NEA in the past?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Check One:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time
Salary:	<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$32,560 <input type="checkbox"/> \$16,259 to \$32,560 <input type="checkbox"/> Below \$16,259

The Educator's Employment Liability (EEL) Program coverage from date below is available only to individuals who are joining the Association for the first time as Active members for the 2005-2006 year. Immediate EEL insurance and MSTA legal coverage is available for members who join and pay pro-rated dues for the rest of this school year. (Please use a regular HCEA membership application for this purpose.)

Dues payments are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Dues payments (or a portion) may be deductible as a miscellaneous itemized deduction. Subscriptions to MSTA ActionLine and NEA publications are included in the cost of membership dues.

As a participant in the Howard County Education Association/Maryland State Teachers Association/National Education Association Early Enrollment Membership Program, I am eligible to receive prior to September 1, 2005 (but in no event before April 1, 2005) access to coverage under the NEA Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program (only). As a condition of eligibility for these benefits, I agree to pay the appropriate "unified" Active membership dues for the 2005-2006 membership year in accordance with the regular payment procedures. Should I fail to do so, my eligibility to receive benefits under the NEA EEL Program shall immediately terminate. In addition, I shall be liable for the cost of any benefits that were provided to me under the NEA EEL Program prior to September 1, 2005.

Payroll Deduction Authorization: I authorize continuing payment or deduction of dues in the sum determined by my local affiliate, the Maryland State Teachers Association and the National Education Association, each year, unless I revoke this authorization in writing to my local affiliate by such time as is designated in my local affiliate's collective bargaining agreement or my local affiliate's policy. In case of my resignation or termination, the board of education shall deduct the balance of my yearly dues from my final check.

SIGNATURE

DATE

REFERRED BY: _____ LOCAL: _____

When you sign and return this post-dated form to HCEA, you will be eligible to receive HCEA member mailings and to vote on the HCEA negotiated agreement. The early enrollment program for MSTA and NEA membership will begin on April 1, 2005, according to the terms explained above and on the attached sheet.
If you wish immediate legal and liability coverage, please fill in a regular HCEA membership form.