

Requests to Help-A-Child Grow

"...this is a very needy family with a number of kids! One child has been taping his shoes together each morning. This student needs us!"

— One request from among many to HCEA Help-A-Child

Since 1993, HCEA members have been helping improve student attendance and performance through their contributions to the HCEA Help-A-Child fund. The fund is a joint effort of HCEA and HCPSS Pupil Personnel Workers. It assists students who are missing school or not fully participating because they lack appropriate

clothing, medical supplies or prescriptions, glasses, school supplies, etc. Some financial resources are available to PPWs for this purpose, but the need for additional funds and for quick response to emergencies gave rise to the fund.

Every dollar contributed goes directly to assist students whose needs are identified by Pupil Personnel Workers, guidance counselors, teachers or other school personnel. Agreements with Wal-Mart, Target, Sears, K-Mart, Professional Vision and Giant Phar-



PPW's Rachel Leasure and Linda Martin are on the Help-A-Child board.

macies allow vouchers to be exchanged for specific items or services. Confidentiality, fair and equal treatment and the right to be treated with courtesy and respect are built into the program.

Association Elections Give Members a Voice

In February, HCEA members will elect officers to serve for a two year term beginning July 1.

In addition to officers, candidates for HCEA delegate to both the MSTA and Representative Assemblies (RAs) will also be on the HCEA ballot. HCEA's 85 MSTA delegates will represent HCEA at both the October MSTA Convention and the Spring MSTA RA. HCEA can send 20 local delegates to the July 2005 NEA RA in Los Angeles. HCEA stipends cover travel, housing, meals and other expenses for MSTA and NEA RA delegates.

Members will also receive MSTA ballots in February to elect state delegates to the NEA Convention and a new MSTA Treasurer. HCEA President Joe Staub is running for

MSTA Treasurer. (See page 5)

Nominations for HCEA officer and local delegate positions open at the January HCEA Rep Council and close at 4 pm on Friday, January 28. MSTA ballots will arrive in schools in early February. HCEA members will receive individually addressed HCEA ballots on Friday, February 18. A nomination form and the election schedule – with instructions and deadlines for ballot return – will be found on pages 4 and 5.

"Choosing new leaders for the Association is an important responsibility for all HCEA members. I encourage you to read about the candidates on our HCEA website (www.hceanea.org) in February and to vote in the election," says Joe Staub.

Requests for assistance have increased every year since Help-A-Child's inception. Contributions from parent and community groups, as well as merchants themselves, have helped support the program. During the past two years, Help-A-Child has been able to fulfill every single approved request made of it. That remains the fund's goal for the future – which we will meet with HCEA member support.

Inside:

"YourVoice" – Get Involved	page 2
The Negotiations Process	page 2
Spring Break	page 3
IA Deadline Looms	page 3
HCEA Gets Grant	page 3
Tax Deduction	page 3
Nomination Form	page 4
Election Schedule	page 5
Staub Seeks MSTA Office	page 5

Your Voice

by Joe Staub,
HCEA
President

“Your active involvement is the only guarantee that HCEA will be successful in achieving your goals.”

Get Involved in Your Association

Why did I become an Association activist? Simple! I spoke up when there was a problem at my school, so I was “elected” an HCEA Rep. I got more active when our contract was broken in 1991. I’ve stayed active because I believe we each can accomplish more together through the Association than we could ever accomplish alone. It’s been the most rewarding professional and personal experience of my 33 year career.

With everyone’s workload increasing, am I “crazy” to ask you to take the time to be involved in your Association? I don’t think so. Your active involvement is the only guarantee that HCEA will be successful in achieving your goals.

HCEA supports you when there is a problem at your school. But your involvement—calling HCEA, setting up a meeting or filing a grievance—is the first step. Being part of a Rep team at your school—rather than letting one person do all of the work—helps everyone. And explaining why you’re an HCEA member and asking others to join is important.

HCEA and MSTA workshops and training programs are always free to members. You can also become



After serving for six years — the maximum three terms allowed in the HCEA bylaws — President Joe Staub, Vice-President Ann DeLacy and Secretary Estelle King are preparing for new challenges. Treasurer Nellie Hill has completed one term as treasurer.

involved as a trainer yourself. Working with an HCEA committee is another way to get involved. Teacher and ESP Negotiations Teams are very time-consuming every several years. Work with other committees, though, requires the commitment of just a few hours throughout the school year. Sub-committees planning HCEA events function just at specific times of the year.

HCEA members also serve on HCPSS advisory and joint committees as part of HCEA’s commitment to improving schools. Contact me if you would like to serve on one of these committees or to speak at Board of Education hearings on issues such as school calendar, budget or Board policies.

HCEA elections are coming up. Maybe the experience of being an HCEA delegate is the one for you. However you choose to be involved, I’d like to have you add your voice to mine by becoming involved in HCEA—your professional association.

What’s Up with Negotiations?

The “collective bargaining” or “negotiations” process, which gives school employees a say in setting their pay and working conditions, is defined in several ways.

State law defines bargaining groups, subjects that can or cannot be negotiated, and requirements of the bargaining process like bargaining “in good faith” and what happens if an agreement can’t be reached. Legal terms, such as “in good faith,” have been defined in court cases.

Past negotiated agreements set some aspects of the bargaining process. Article II of the teachers’ contract and Article 16 of

the ESP contract, for example, set starting dates and say how a mediator would be chosen, if needed.

Negotiating teams also agree on certain guidelines for negotiations. They agree, for example, that the process will be confidential. This allows the teams to explore alternatives and work out agreements that would not be possible if their discussions were made public.

Within these parameters, HCEA keeps its members informed so members can support Association proposals and vote intelligently on the final agreement. Any “tentative agreement” is submitted to HCEA members for final acceptance or rejection.



National Board Support – Maria Wieber (right), a Bonnie Branch MS science teacher who is pursuing National Board Certification this year, takes a look at the sound recording equipment HCEA provides for members' use. Ann Marie Bassolino (left), an Ellicott Mills MS math teacher, also attended HCEA's reception for National Board Certified teachers to learn more about the process.

Congratulations

to HCEA member Diane Boarman, gifted resource teacher at Patapsco Middle school who achieved National Board Certification in 2004.

Spring Break and the 2005-2006 Calendar

The on-going saga of spring break is an example of the interplay between management prerogative, HCEA advocacy and individual members' activity on their own behalf. The Board of Education sets the school calendar. HCEA is one voice on the HCPSS Calendar Committee, which makes recommendations to the Board. When the question of scheduling make-up days during Spring Break comes up, HCEA speaks up loud and clear. Our members are affected personally and financially affected, when spring break is subject to last-minute change. When members express their individual concerns to the Board and support HCEA's position, this helps resolve issues in everyone's best interest.

Title One IAs Face January 2006 Deadline

Title One Instructional Assistants, who don't have 48 hours of post-secondary education or an AA degree, have until January 2006 to pass the ParaPro Assessment test. HCEA will hold test preparation workshops prior to tests given at Oakland Mills HS in March and April and in other Maryland venues in June. Registration booklets are available from HCEA. Watch the HCEA website and monthly HCEA event posters for workshop dates and times. Find out more on the HCEA web site (Information Center/ On the Job Issues).

HCEA gets NEA Grant

HCEA is one of only four local Associations in the Mid-Atlantic region to receive a 2005 NEA Urban Grant. The grant will fund a series of member meetings by job category and follow-up activities. The purpose of the meetings will be to identify unmet needs that HCEA can address or can advocate for with the school system. Watch for an announcement of the meeting of your job category and join HCEA in developing programs to address member needs. Find out more on the HCEA web site.

Save Those Receipts for Tax Deduction

Teachers, counselors and assistants who work 900 hours during a school year may deduct up to \$250 of qualified out-of-pocket expenses when figuring their adjusted gross income for federal taxes. The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses, noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. See the HCEA web site for more information and background.

Student Assistants Recoup Overtime Pay

As a result of HCEA's intervention on behalf of student assistants this fall, a recent HCPSS directive was issued by the Superintendent. It will result in additional compensation for many middle and high school student assistants whose work day increased when the Board of Education extended the middle and high school student day in the fall. Any student assistant who worked additional time, for which he/she has not been paid, should report the additional time worked since the beginning of the school year on the time sheet verification form and have the his/her supervisor countersign it. HCPSS and HCEA have agreed to extend the student assistant work day by fifteen minutes each day through the remainder of the year. Salaries will be increased on a proportional basis.



Secretary Brochures Project Advances

Laura Woods (left) "autographs" a copy of the new HCEA Principal's Secretaries brochure in which she is featured. Janice McCue, her colleague and a teachers' secretary at Laurel Woods Elementary will be part of HCEA's project to produce a similar brochure about teachers' secretaries. You'll find a copy of the brochure on the HCEA web site.

HCEA Election 2005 Nomination Form

Please complete the following:

I _____, hereby state my intention to seek the position of:
Name

- _____ HCEA President
- _____ HCEA Vice President
- _____ HCEA Treasurer
- _____ HCEA Secretary

- _____ Delegate to the NEA Convention,
July 2005
- _____ Delegate to the MSTA Convention
and RA, October 2005 and Spring
RA, April 2006

My signature indicates my willingness to abide by the HCEA/MSTA/NEA policies, guidelines and Code of Ethics.

Signature _____

School _____

Date _____
Month, Day, Year

School Assignment _____

Return to HCEA no later than Friday January 28, 2005

Optional: You may include a biographical sketch. Please do not exceed 100 words if you are a candidate for a position as HCEA officer or 25 words if you are a candidate for delegate to the MSTA and NEA Conventions.

2005 HCEA Election Schedule

(MSTA election information is in italics.)

- January 11 (Tuesday): Nominations Open at Rep Council
January 28 (Friday): Nominations Close (Due to HCEA by 4 pm)
Candidate biographical sketches due
First week in February: *MSTA ballots arrive in schools*
Reps conduct MSTA elections
February 8 (Tuesday): February Rep Council Meeting
- Candidate remarks (at the candidate's option)
- *Reps return MSTA ballots if election has been held*
February 18 (Friday): HCEA ballots arrive in schools
February 18 – March 4: Reps conduct HCEA elections

DEADLINES:

- February 25 (Friday): ***Deadline to mail in MSTA ballots***
March 4 (Friday): ***MSTA ballots must be received by MSTA Pony HCEA ballots to HCEA***
March 7 (Monday): **Hand delivered ballots due to HCEA (4 pm)**

Election results will be announced to Building Reps by March 15, 2005.

American Fitness

HCEA and American Fitness (at 9200 Route 108, just east of Route 29) are working together to provide HCEA members with yet another service to improve well-being and reduce stress. If one of your New Year's Resolutions is to take better care of yourself, check out the extra-ordinary fitness package being offered by American Fitness to HCEA members at www.hceanea.org or call American Fitness at 410-964-2262.

BJ's Offer Extended

HCEA is offering a special: Two BJ's Wholesale Club discount cards, valid for 15 months, for just \$25. This offer is BJ's best promotion ever and expires Jan. 31, 2005. Visit the HCEA website for details and an application.

Information for Candidates

If you wish to be a candidate for an HCEA office, you must:

1. Be an HCEA member in good standing.
2. Be nominated, or nominate yourself.
3. Complete an "HCEA Nomination Form" indicating each position that you are seeking.

All nomination forms must be returned in to the HCEA office no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, January 28, 2005.

Candidates may also provide a biographical sketch in the space provided on the Nomination Form or on a separate page. **The limit for the biographical sketch for a candidate for an HCEA officer is 100 words. Candidates for Delegate to the MSTA and NEA Conventions are limited to 25 words.** The information provided in a candidate's biographical sketch will be distributed, unedited, to the membership. **Due date for biographical sketches is also January 28, 2005.**

MSTA Election Ballots: Arrive Earlier, Due First

Members will receive MSTA ballots during the first week in February, before HCEA ballots arrive in schools on February 18th. Reps are asked to conduct MSTA elections as early as possible and to bring completed ballots to the February Rep Council on February 8th. **Any ballots received after March 4th will not be counted.**

Joe Staub Runs for MSTA Treasurer

As he completes his third term as HCEA President, Joe Staub has announced his candidacy for MSTA Treasurer. "I bring to this campaign extensive leadership experience in our local and state organizations and a background in business administration. MSTA's Treasurer has a tremendous responsibility in planning and monitoring a multi-million dollar budget. I look forward to the challenge of representing all of MSTA's members in this position."

Joe has served as HCEA President for six years. He has also served two terms on the MSTA Board of Directors and as a member of the MSTA Budget Committee. While working as a social studies teacher in the Howard County Public Schools, Joe earned his Masters Degree in Business Administration, and has taught management and business courses at the Howard Community College.

Voting for MSTA Treasurer, along with MSTA Delegates to the NEA Convention, will take place during February. The deadline for receipt of ballots is Friday, March 4, 2005. The HCEA Rep Council voted unanimously at its November meeting to endorse Joe for MSTA Treasurer. We urge ALL HCEA members to cast their votes in this important election. Please help us to **Elect Joe Staub MSTA Treasurer.**

Dates to Remember:

Please RSVP to HCEA for the events below.

Communicating with Administrators in Difficult Situations

Thursday, January 20th (note date change)
4 – 5:30 PM, Site to be announced

First HCEA Legislative Lobbying Night

Monday, January 24th (Leave HCEA at 4:30 PM, light dinner and briefing in Annapolis, return 9 PM)

Nominations close for HCEA elections

Friday, January 28th – Candidate bios due

HCEA Rep Council

Tuesday, February 8th
4:15-5:45, LRHS
Reps bring completed MSTA ballots

MSTA National Board Certification Reception

Wednesday, February 9th
5-7 PM, at MSTA in Annapolis

Stress Management Workshop

Wednesday, February 16th
4-5:30 PM, HCEA

American Fitness Open House

Wednesday, February 16th
4-7 PM, 9200 Route 8

HCEA Elections begin

Friday, February 18th

HCEA IPD Committee Meeting

(Instruction and Professional Development)
Thursday, February 24th
4:15-5:30 PM, HCEA

Deadline to Mail MSTA Ballots

Friday, February 25th

Deadline to Pony HCEA Ballots to HCEA

Friday, March 4th

Deadline for Receipt of HCEA Ballots

Monday, March 7th
4 PM, HCEA

Facts about Maryland

Did you know that:

- Maryland is the second wealthiest state after New Jersey.
- One-third of state general spending pays for free k-12 public education and libraries.
- Another third pays for higher education, health and public safety.
- More than \$80 million was cut from k-12 education in FY 2005.
- Tuition and fees at Maryland public colleges and universities among the highest, 36% more than the national average.
- \$122 million was cut from the higher education budget in FY 2004 and FY 2005.
- Pensions for Maryland teachers and school employees are among the lowest in the United States.
- Funds to protect Maryland's environment has been cut 17% in the last 2 ½ years.
- Maryland faces a \$300 million budget shortfall for FY 2006 and more than a billion dollar shortfall in each year thereafter.
- Maryland is one of only a handful of states where state and local spending for programs has declined relative to personal income.
- Only about 1/3 of Maryland corporations pay any state corporate income tax.
- Maryland ranks 50th among states in the total share of local and state taxes paid by business.
- Within 2 ½ years, balancing the state budget without new revenues will require cutting \$1 out of every \$8 in state spending.

Negotiations Begin

The teachers' negotiating team met for the first time with the Board of Education negotiating team on Monday, December 20th. They presented and explained the team's proposals. The ESP negotiating team had its first formal meeting with the Board's ESP negotiating team on Monday, January 10th. HCEA will be publishing regular



HCEA Bulletins to keep members informed about progress in negotiations. If you have not received a *Bulletin* by the time you read this, please contact our HCEA rep or HCEA directly. You can also learn more about negotiations on the HCEA web site in February.

Make a Difference

Do we want our elected officials to cut or limit public services? Should they raise revenues for programs we and our children need? It's up to us to help legislators and the public understand the human cost when important programs aren't funded. Your personal stories and insights into the needs of children can make a difference. Share them! Call HCEA or visit the HCEA web site to find out how HCEA can help you make sure your co-workers and public officials understand what is at stake in the state budget debate.

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