



HCEA Works to Improve Pensions



HCEA Building Rep Joanne Scheler (left) listens as HCEA UniServ Director Dan Collins (right) talks to Centennial Lane staff about pensions.

MSTA's "Push for Pensions" campaign is having an impact with Association members .. and beyond! Parents, legislators and editorial writers are agreeing that *something* must be done to increase educators' pensions.

Discussion about the final outcome is a normal part of the political process – especially since significant state resources are involved. HCEA's goal is to make sure your voice is heard. The Association's position is that educators will be able to retire with dignity – with sixty percent of our average final salary after thirty years of work. This big improvement will only happen if you continue to tell your legislators how important it is.

Inside:

Transfer Rights	page 3
Workload	page 3
SYMS	page 3
National Board Certification	page 4
Injury On-the-Job	page 4



Natalie Janiszewski, HCEA "Push for Pensions" coordinator, and Greg Smith, Board member and Government Relations Committee co-chair, brief building reps on pensions.



Senator Ed Kasemeyer talks with the HCEA GR Committee about pension improvement.

We've come this far because Association members have been willing to speak up for themselves. With the legislature in session, it's time for EVERYONE to add their voice!

Keep sending messages to your legislators.

The situation changes regularly. Sign up for MST A Frontline on the MST A web site and stay up-to-date on the actions you need to take during the legislative session.

If you like what HCEA and MST A are doing on your behalf, help us grow.

Find a single—yes, just one—non-member and convince him/her to join HCEA. The greater our membership numbers, the stronger our Push for Pensions.

HCEA and MST A Elections

HCEA members will elect nine members to the HCEA Board of Directors this winter.

Five candidates (including at least one ESP) receiving the highest number of votes will serve a two-year term. Four candidates (including at least one ESP) with the next highest vote total will serve a one-year term. These four positions will be open again in 2007. HCEA will also be electing delegates to up-coming NEA and MST A Conventions.

Nominations will close February 3rd and ballots will be in schools February 24th. All ballots are due at HCEA on Monday, March 13th at 4 PM.

The next MST A president, vice-president, four members of the MST A Board and state delegates to the NEA Convention are also being chosen this year. HCEA members are urged to participate in the elections and to vote for HCEA members for NEA Convention delegate. Contact your building rep or HCEA for nomination forms.

Watch for Job Satisfaction Survey Results in February!

The View from Here

by Ann De Lacy,
HCEA
President

“We’re making
a positive
difference!”

Important Steps Forward

As the first semester ends and my first six months as president comes to a close, I want you to know what HCEA is doing to fulfill the promises I made to you when I campaigned last year. HCEA has taken some important steps to improve members’ lives and working conditions.

Enhancing our Pensions: The Government Relations Committee has worked tirelessly to build support for MSTA’s “Push for Pensions” campaign. HCEA leaders and members have met with and will continue to lobby Howard County delegates and senators, host house parties, hold school meetings, contact elected officials in the districts where we live, write letters to the editor, and do whatever it takes to improve our pension benefits...this year! Special thanks to GR Committee members, co-chairs Greg Smith and Bridget Jones and “Push for Pensions” coordinators Natalie Janiszewski and Donna Schulze.

Provide short-term disability for maternity leave: HCEA is working with HCPSS to provide a payroll slot for a short term disability provider. Employees (within given parameters) would then be able to purchase financial protection for emergencies *and* routine pregnancies.

Collaborate with HCPSS in the best interests of children and our members: In addition to my informal meetings and conversations with the superintendent, he and I co-chair a Labor-Management Committee to “resolve non-negotiated matters of mutual concern of the parties.” Among the concerns we have been addressing are the problems created by the SYMS program, Workers’ Compensation/Concentra Health, indoor air quality and improving administrator understanding of our contractual agreements.

Increase HCPSS’s National Board Certified teachers: IPD* Co-Chairs Maleeta Kitchen and Pat Pecor and I have been working with Jackie Conarton, Director of Staff Development, to increase outreach to and support for potential National Board candidates. Two Montgomery County members, Joan Mory and Chris Frank, are providing support. (See Calendar.)

Increase professional development opportunities for support professionals: In collaboration with HCPSS, HCEA will provide Para Pro training for instructional assistants in Title One schools who have not yet met No



Ann talks pensions with Delegate Frank Turner.

Child Left Behind requirements. We’ve done some on-site ESP professional development and hope to expand those opportunities.

Provide more support for new educators: Meetings are set up to plan how to provide more mentors and other support for new teachers and other employees.

Ensure that all HCEA committees are functioning with increased member participation: HCEA currently has eleven functioning committees. You can find out about them on the HCEA web site. Contact HCEA to join a committee. We need you.

Decrease member workload: Labor-Management meetings, our Job Satisfaction Survey and contract enforcement have helped tackle this issue. A recent Supreme Court decision provides us an opportunity to address the burden on staff created by AYP requirements and special education law. (See article page 3.)

You’ll hear more about my goals for HCEA negotiations this spring. Call me and let me know your concerns – *and* that you want to help. We’re making a positive difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann".

Legislative Breakfast



Members of the Howard County Board of Education answer questions at HCEA's December Legislative Breakfast.



(l-r) Delegate Bates, Senator Quinter, Delegate Malone, County Council Member Ullman and Delegate Bobo share their positions with HCEA.



Laurie Hornicek (Mount View MS) asks a question as Debra Rambo (rear, Patuxent Valley MS) and Fannie Avery (front, Longfellow ES) listen.

Can HCEA, MSTA or NEA member benefits save you money? Your ACCESS membership card has some great deals! Register at www.mstanea.org.

Know Your Contract - Teacher Transfers

HCEA wants to help alleviate the stress and anxiety that is sometimes a part of the transfer process. Teachers' deadline to submit a voluntary transfer request is March 1st. Requests need to be filed to each school a teacher is considering transferring to.

HCEA negotiated new language last year so that teachers will know that each request was received. The contract now states that principals "shall acknowledge receipt of the request for [voluntary] transfer." (Art. 6, Sec. A.2.A) This section also guarantees a teacher a written explanation of the reasons for the denial of a voluntary transfer if he/she requests it.

The last day for teachers to pull voluntary transfer requests is June 1st. Many teachers have told HCEA that they pull their requests for fear of being placed somewhere they do not want to go. You may only be asked to

take a position at the school and level for which you applied. This year's earlier Job Satisfaction Survey results will help members assess the climate at different schools.

Members have also expressed concern that involuntary or administrative transfers have been (or may be) used punitively. Central Office discourages this practice. To help alleviate anxiety, HCEA fought for language in the contract giving teachers notification from the principal by February 15th that he/she will be recommending an administrative transfer. This allows a teacher to apply for a voluntary transfer if he/she is interested in doing so.

Information on transfers, assignment and reassignment and promotional vacancies can be found in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the teachers' contract. Members with concerns should contact HCEA.

HCEA Helps New Homeowner

Ann, Thanks to you, I am now a homeowner in Howard County! When I came to the Minority Affairs Committee social, you gave me a flyer from Howard Bank. ***I took the flyer, made copies, and called the bank myself to see if I was eligible.*** Everything happened so rapidly. I was approved and purchased a home within two months. Wow! I know I am also the first person to go through the program at the bank. ... To repay you and the bank, I want to take a few minutes at rep council...to tell my story. Thanks again!

Sheree M. Powell
(Bonnie Branch MS)

"If it is to be, it is up to me."

Special Ed Workload

In a further step toward addressing workload issues, HCEA has asked members Janice Weed (Swansfield ES) and Ron Reis (Waverly ES) to assist in creating a workgroup on special education concerns. If you would like to help HCEA address appropriateness of instruction, discipline and other issues, let HCEA know.

SYMS Problems Continue

HCEA has been concerned about problems that technology changes have created for staff. Dr. Cousin assured HCEA President Ann De Lacy that changes are being made and that "problems will be addressed in the near future." Dr. Cousin hopes staff will let Central Office know what does and does not work. E-mail comments to Robert_Glascock@hcpss.org.

Dates to Remember:

Call HCEA for information.

HCEA Night at Toby's MAME! Starring Cathy Mundy

Wednesday, February 1
Tickets – 410-730-8311

HCEA Election Nominations Close

Friday, February 3
Due at HCEA at 4 PM

Job Satisfaction Survey Results

Week of February 13th
See your HCEA Building Rep

HCEA Elections Begin

Friday, February 24

National Board Certification Information Sessions

Monday, February 27 and
Wednesday, March 22
4:30 PM at Homewood Center

HCEA Ballots Due

Monday, March 13
Due at HCEA at 4 PM

Maryland Multicultural Coalition

Conference on Cultural Proficiency
Saturday, March 25
Reservoir High School

Contact HCEA about committee meetings and training opportunities.

Unexpected Classroom Visits

Educators want parents to be informed about classroom activities. The rights guaranteed in Article 10.G of the teachers' contract helps to protect student safety and minimize disruptions. Administrator approval and advance notice allow the teacher to request that the visit be rescheduled "based on instructional needs and the best interests of the students." Find out more on the HCEA web site.

ESPs Get Ready to Negotiate

The current two-year ESP Negotiated Agreement with the Board of Education expires June 30, 2007. Negotiations will begin in the fall of 2006, but preparatory work is already underway. HCEA is looking for volunteers to

assist in contract preparations and to serve on the HCEA ESP Bargaining Team. Interested HCEA Educational Support Professional members are asked to contact Dan Collins or Ann De Lacy at HCEA, 410-997-3440.

National Board Certification

Congratulations to William Aldrich II (MWES), Deborah Gray (TSES), William Kenney, (PMS) and Marya Pecukonis (TRES) on attaining National Board Certification. HCEA has been working with HCPSS to provide more information to potential

candidates and more support for those who undertake this rigorous process. Information meetings will be held in January, February and March (see Calendar). Come find out how your Association can help you improve your teaching and advance your career goals.

Know Your Contract – ESP 'Volunteers'

Accepting a schedule change - like working during evening parent conferences – has to be voluntary on the employee's part. Evening hours would

have to be compensated with regular hourly pay (not workshop wages). Call HCEA if you have a question.

Snow Day Notice: Never Early Enough

It's great to know about snow days early. Unfortunately, Hogwarts is the only school around with a crystal ball! HCEA has always advocated for earlier notice, because so many members have to travel long distances to work. Bottom line: closings are to be posted on the HCPSS web site by 5:30 AM.

Job Injury Two-Step

If you get hurt at work, 1) inform your supervisor and then 2) immediately call HCEA. Why? Because understanding the Maryland Workers' Compensation statute may make the difference in whether you are covered for time off and medical expenses. Just because a person is hurt at work may not be enough for the insurance to apply. HCEA wants to help members file all these forms correctly so they will be sure to be covered for a compensable injury. This is a benefit of HCEA membership. Take advantage of it!



Students spoke with HCEA building reps about the issue of a student vote on the Board of Education. HCEA has a representative on the Board committee considering the issue.

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	Ann De Lacy
Vice President	Donna Schulze
Treasurer	Joe Staub
Secretary	Colleen Morris
Editor	Marilyn Hunter
Design	Carol Riley