

HCEA ESP Spirit Warms a Chilly Day



ESP Picnic – (clockwise from upper left) Prize drawing; Supt. Sydney Cousin, Board Member Mary Kay Sigaty and County Councilman Guy Guzzone (rear) chat with Education Support Professionals.

Jackets and gloves were the order of the day as five hundred HCPSS Education Support Professionals (ESPs) enjoyed the Fifth Annual HCEA ESP Picnic on Friday, May 6. Superintendent Sydney Cousin, Administrative Director Earl Slacum, Board of Education member Mary Kay Sigaty and County Council member Guy Guzzone joined support professionals from all job categories for hamburgers, sausages, cookies, cake and all the trimmings.

Door prizes were drawn every hour. Grand prize, a weekend in a Deep Creek Lake chalet, was won by Ethel

Altman, Special Ed Assistant at Patapsco MS.

The HCEA ESP Organizing Committee also presented long-handled grilling tools to out-going HCEA President Joe Staub in honor of his performance as grill chef at the first ESP Picnic.

You'll find more pictures at hceanea.org/esp/picnic05/index.html.

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Why Eleven Months?

Many HCEA members working *per diem* during the summer have sought 11- or 12-month status, which provides pension credit (as *per diem* does not) and an additional sick day. HCEA believes that pensions and other benefits should be based on all income and time worked for all employees. For the first time this year HCEA was able to negotiate an 11-month scale for some.

The Board, not HCEA, has the right to place employees on salary scales. Current eleven-month guidance counselors will move to an 11-month scale. Designated teachers in the Infants and Toddlers program will also have the 11-month option. Scheduling and work assignment will be affected by this choice. This issue of pension credit on all income will also be addressed in MSTA's proposal to the legislature's summer study on pension enhancement.



I&T Teachers Meet – Teacher Negotiation Team Chair Colleen Rie and Chief Negotiator Marinus Ambrose take part in a discussion of 11 month positions.

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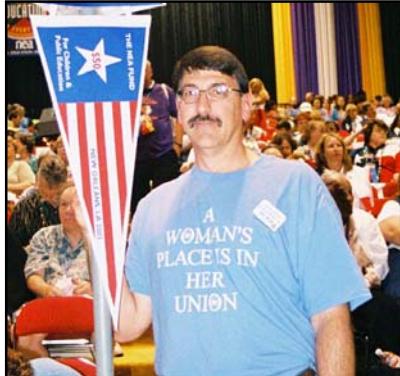
Your Voice

by Joe Staub,
HCEA
President



“Many challenges we faced together still confront us.”

Memories –
(from top)
Accepting an MSTA Membership Award,
Working with the Superintendent,
At the NEA RA,
Speaking to the Board,
Communicating with Parents.



Goals for the Future

The six years in which I have led HCEA have been times of tremendous growth and accomplishment. Many challenges we faced together still confront us. Much remains to be done.

We work in public schools at a time when public education in America is under attack. Privatization, charter schools and voucher schemes; unfunded mandates and unreasonable requirements for both students and educators; labels like “failing schools” and “not highly qualified;” growing economic and social pressures on us, our students and their families — all make our daily lives more difficult.

My final presentation to the County Council at its hearing on the Board of Education’s budget on May 7, 2005, included my vision of the support that the County should provide to the school system. I focused on two goals.

Goal Number One: Make Per-Pupil Expenditures “Number One” in Maryland.

Howard County schools lay a firm basis for the health of our community, its high median income and highly educated adult population. In the wealthiest county in the nation, per-pupil spending should not just keep pace with a growing student population. I believe that the county’s target for per-pupil spending should be to make it the highest in the state.

Goal Number Two: Raise salaries for Howard County Education Employees to “Number One” in Maryland.

Howard County schools have set high goals for their students. To accomplish this requires competitive salaries to ensure that the Howard County Public Schools attract and retain the very best teachers, counselors, psychologists, secretaries, instructional assistants and other support professionals. Reaching this goal will require the commitment of additional funds in future years.

I know these are two challenging goals for the Howard County Council and the Board of Education. I hope that you will embrace and work toward them in the coming years to ensure the very best education for the children of Howard County. Achieving them, in my view, should be the mutual goals of HCEA, HCPSS, the Board of Education, the Superintendent, County Executive, and Howard County Council.

All the best,

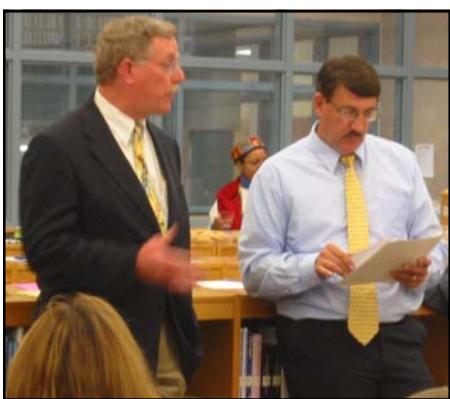
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe".

IAs Plan to Improve Professional Opportunities



IAs Surveyed – Karen Filippelli and Pat Pecor (seated l-r) gather information at the ESP Picnic.

Do you feel valued as a professional? What do you feel is the best title for your job? Have you received adequate training? Would you like more school-based professional development opportunities? These were some of the questions that the IA sub-committee of HCEA's Instructional and Professional Development (IPD) Committee asked IAs at the ESP Picnic. The sub-committee, headed by Pat Pecor and Karen Filippelli (Special Ed IAs at OMHS), will be using the responses to plan for 2005-2006. IAs interested in participating with the committee may call HCEA for more information.



Summer Study on Pensions – Bill Brown, teacher representative on the Maryland State Retirement and Pension Board, explained the state legislature's planned summer study on pension improvement at the May Rep Council. Members may contact Bill for more information at wilddbrown@aol.com.

Members Explore Benefits at Picnic

NEA Member Benefits – Support staff took advantage of the ESP Picnic to find out how, as NEA members, they can save on car and home insurance. You can find out more about NEA Member Benefits from the link on the HCEA web site.



MSTA Offers Free Professional Development

The MSTA Convention (October 21-22, 2005) is MSTA's annual professional development and networking event. It includes Association's Representative Assembly (RA) attended by nearly 900 delegates. It features more than 50 different workshops chosen for their relevance to the changing educational environment, an educational trade exhibition, a fabulous

buffet dinner and dance. RA delegates have time to attend workshops targeted to all grade levels and all education employees.

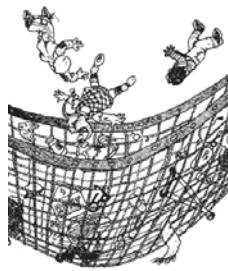
Positions as HCEA Delegate to the Convention are still available. Call Joe Staub at 410-997-3440 to register. Delegates receive a stipend to cover convention meals and hotel costs.

Payroll Deduction Makes it Easy to Support HCEA Help-A-Child

Help-A-Child delivers emergency help to HCPSS students when no other help is available. It is administered by HCEA and HCPSS PPWs. Fund Director Karen Dunlop reported that the number of students needing help is steadily growing and is up by a third this year. She thanked those who generously sent checks periodically to the Fund.

Dunlop explained that a payroll deduction option for the tax-deductible contributions will be available next school year. "We hope this easy way of giving will motivate those who haven't contributed before to join us in this important work," she said. To contribute by payroll deduction, fill in the form below and return it to HCEA.

Help-A-Child Payroll Deduction Authorization



Name: _____

School: _____

\$ _____ per pay (for 20 pays)

Signed: _____

Dates to Remember:

Call HCEA for information or to RSVP.

HCEA Board/Rep Appreciation Dinner

Wednesday, June 1
4:15 – 6:30 PM
Nixon's Farm, West Friendship

HCEA Retirement Reception

Monday, June 6
3:30 – 5:30 PM, HCEA Office

ParaPro Assessment Practice Test

(for members signed up for the June 11th ParaPro Assessment Test)
Tuesday, June 7
4:00-6:00 PM
Kahler Hall, Harper's Choice

HCEA Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, June 7

Last Day of School

Thursday, June 16
Enjoy your summer!

MSTA Summer Training

July 12-14
Emerging Leaders Academy, Baltimore
July 20-21
Leadership Development, St. Michaels
July 27-28
Teaching and Learning, Rocky Gap



HCEA says "Thanks!" - HCEA presented a crystal vase and roses to retired Board of Education member Sandra French at the May Rep Council meeting, thanking her for her generous support of HCEA's Help-A-Child fund. French spoke to Reps about involving students in efforts to improve housing for Howard County's less fortunate.

Cafeteria Workers Begin Negotiations



Cafeteria Workers Meet - Dan Collins and Joe Staub answered questions in April.

On April 21, four shifts of food service assistants met with HCEA President Joe Staub and ESP Chief Negotiator Dan Collins to discuss language they hoped to see included in the HCEA ESP contract for their job category. Cafeteria workers will be covered by the provisions of the contract for the first time starting on July 1.

Fund for Children: Phone Calls for a Good Cause

If you received a phone call from someone asking you to contribute to the **Fund for Children and Public Education**, we hope you weren't eating dinner at the time. We hope you said "yes" and pledged to contribute.

HCEA knows that phone calls at home aren't pleasant. But we hope members understand it's for a good cause. The Association can not use dues to support political candidates. Voluntary member contributions are needed to help elect friends of education.

In the past you may have been bombarded with paper and solicitations at school. This year contributing just a buck or two by payroll deduction will make it easy to protect your (and your students') future.

Staub and Collins stressed how important it is that this employee group will have a *legally binding* contract for the first time — one that includes "no reprisals" for Association activity. "July 1 is a new day!" Staub told the audience of HCPSS employees who have not had union representation in the past.

Several members volunteered as a team to participate in negotiations. There was consensus on the priority of defining food service assistants' work year and work day.

Collins stressed the importance of signing up as HCEA members and urged those attending to sign up colleagues during HCEA Early Enrollment. HCEA is continuing discussions on food service managers' right to representation.

*"Summer afternoon...
the two most
beautiful words in
the English
language."*

- Henry James


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Education Association**

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