

MARCH 2023

Official monthly newsletter of Harford County Education Association

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ccrawford-smick@mseane.org

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From the President:



Colleagues,
Spring is around the corner and its a busy time in the world of public education. We have very important workahead of us. The most important is ensuring that the HCPS Budget is funded. Please take a moment to email County Executive Bob Cassilly to urge him to once again fully fund the HCPS operational budget. All 5,000 HCPS employees and 36,000students are counting on him. Refer to page nine of this newsletter for more information. HCPS has made significant progress over the last few years, we cannot allow the "tighten your bootstraps" mindset allow this school district to go backwards. Underfunding HCPS could result in HUNDREDS of position cuts. Please email Mr. Cassilly regarding the importance of a fully funded budget and let him know how any cuts would negatively impact our schools.

Throughout this newsletter, you will find numerous opportunities for professional development. Please take advantage of the member-exclusive opportunities. In addition, if you are interested in attending the Summer Leadership Conference, please let me know. HCEA will be able to pay for the training and lodging for a select number of members.

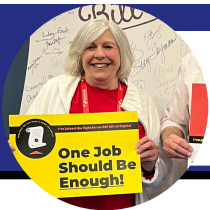
We are looking for volunteers to participate in any of our committees next year. Please complete the INTEREST FORM on page seven if you would like to get more involved. We strive to have something for everyone, so please let us know if you want to start a new committee or subgroup.

I hope to see many of you at our upcoming social event on March 31 from 4-6:30 at Coakley's . I truly enjoy chatting and getting to know our members at these events.

I appreciate your commitment to public education and HCEA.

In Solidarity,

Chrystie Crawford-Smick



ESP Perspectives

Cindy Poper, ESP Vice President
Bel Air Middle School

March is in full swing, as is testing season. Testing always proves stressful for our students, as well as adults. We need to be as flexible and responsive as we can to both our students and our co-workers when reacting to behaviors resulting from the stress and anxiety over testing.

Try to be calm and supportive. Make sure that you get your breaks and take advantage of them. Listen to music, catch up on a podcast, watch a funny video, do anything that calms your mind and keeps you on an even keel.

The ESP Bill of Rights is getting more and more endorsements. If your building has not had an endorsement meeting yet, contact your building rep to see how you can help. You can also contact any member of HCEA Leadership for assistance. Several members of the MSEA ESP Organizing Committee will be testifying on Wednesday in the General Assembly in support of the ESP Workgroup bill. This bill would establish a work group to study ESP wages across the state and make recommendations to the General Assembly.

Thank you to those that agreed to present sessions on our April 3rd and 4th PD Days. With over 100 sessions being offered everyone should find things to help them learn and grow.

Remember spring forward happens in a little more than a week, a sure sign that Spring is on its way!

Negotiations Update

We have a tentative agreement with HCPS on our language items, COLA, and benefits. Everyone in both certificated and ESP units will get a 3% COLA and a step if eligible for one. For benefits, the premiums have not changed and coverages remain the same, even though there is a change in dental providers.

For the certificated unit, we are really excited to expand some contractual rights related to the discipline procedures. Discipline must be conducted in private, and (this is really big for us), admin **MUST** be told they have a right to representation and have up to 2 business days to arrange representation for all disciplinary meetings.

In addition, one of the rights the negotiations team was most proud of is the contractual right to "join, not join, and/or participate in the Association **without reprisal**. This means that if an administrator retaliates against you for union activity, we can grieve it.

Check out the full [Certificated TA here](#) and the [Benefits TA here](#).

2023 HCEA Election Results

HCEA President:

Chrystie Crawford-Smick

Certificated Vice President:

Doug Rudd

ESP Vice President:

Cindy Poper

MSEA Delegates:

Chrystie Crawford-Smick

Jacob Bennett

Abigail Bennett

Doug Rudd

Cynthia F Poper

Jacob Zebley

Andrea Weedn-Hughes

Allison WeednHughes

Robert Edward Tucker

Tracy Papinchock

Erin Pracko

Donna Kasnic

George Kasnic

Brenda Greene Hinton

Matthew Blaylock

Leigh Bondrole

Crystal Rufenacht

Kelley Fonger

Colleen Bianco

Ryan Burbey

Noah Hutton

Jason King

Kindra Stevens

Amanda Wheeler

Jennifer Mayo

Essence Stewart

Kimberly Phillips

Aaron Mason

Nicole Young

Jacqueline Samek

Shawn Sharpeta

Oliver Bertalo

Jessica Riedel

Colleen Patzer

Jennifer Paul Bray

Kim Mayforth

Tonique Smothers

Seth Tillman

Alyssa Pettus

Bonnie Anderson

Angela M. Armstead- Foye

Alicia Jones

Elizabeth Grady

Kerry Whitehead

Deanna Burch

NEA Delegates:

Winners will be contacted once state delegates have been finalized.

Detailed results from the local election can be found [HERE](#).

OPPORTUNITY IS KNOCKING!



SLC23

You're Worth It!

Fight for a Living Wage, Fairness, and Respect!



MSEA'S SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

JULY 25 -27, 2023 • MARITIME INSTITUTE, LINTHICUM

You're worth it! Fight for a living wage, fairness, and respect!

At SLC 2023, we're keeping it classic with a twist. Attendees will learn the skills they need to advocate for fairness in their job, no matter the title, and win contracts to match through our core trainings—that's classic. The twist? We're going hard for the endorsement—by every local union— of the Education Support Professional Bill of Rights.

HCEA and MSEA can provide funding and a mileage stipend to attend this awesome training! Interested? Contact Chrystie at ccrawford-smick@mseane.org

To learn more and view the course catalog

<https://marylandeducators.org/summer-leadership-conference-2/>

Know Your Contract: Leave... again

Unfortunately, we have received a lot of calls from members regarding how building level administration is handling leave for staff. We want to set the record straight for our members.

- 1.If your school is requiring you fill out a slip to take leave, please contact us immediately, especially if you work in an elementary schools where this seems to be a larger issue. **You are not required to submit a form for permission to take leave.** All you need to do is enter leave into SmartFind. Principals have been told to stop requiring these forms. Your administration cannot tell you that cannot enter your own leave in SmartFind, either.
2. If you are taking leave, **you do NOT need to find your own coverage** for duties or for your class coverage. You also are NOT responsible for finding your own substitute.
- 3.For **sick leave, there is no limit to how many days are allowed a year.** Some admin have been telling staff they are only allowed 10 days a year. This is false. If you have the leave, you can take it if when you are ill and need it (or for illness in family). If you take more than 5 sick days in a row, you will have to fill out FMLA paperwork.
4. **If you wish to take a personal day and are giving more than 3 days notice (and it is not attached to a holiday or PD day), you actually do not need permission.** Members have contacted us that admin is denying personal leave months in advance because they don't know what staffing will look like that day. This is not contractually allowed. If this happens to you, please reach out to HCEA immediately. Enter the leave in SmartFind more than 3 days in advance. HCEA also suggests letting your admin know you put in for personal leave,. **Admin is NOT allowed to ask why you need a personal day.**

If you have any questions related to leave, please reach out to your assigned UniServ Director.

MSEA IPD CONFERENCE

Registration is now open for the March 18, 2023 IPD Conference. This year's theme is Moving Forward Together in a Dynamic World. Reflect on what you have learned as an educator in 2022 and reimagine professional learning. The conference will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Baltimore-BWI Airport, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. A light breakfast and lunch will be provided by MSEA.

Attendees can choose from workshops in these strands:

1. New Educator Survival 101
2. School Engagement Reinvented
3. Elevating Our Diverse Communities
4. Collaboration within School Communities

HCEA is offering scholarships to cover registration, mileage and tolls. Please contact Chrystie at ccrawford-smick@mseaneia.org if you are interested in attending.

BUILDING REP CORNER

All building reps should have received updated membership lists. If there are inaccuracies, please send them to **Lisa Cover, HCEA Office Manager**, at LCover@mseane.org.



Picture it... Ocean City, 2023...Hundreds of local association representatives gather for the annual MSEA Convention. Two HCEA building reps wait to hear about a statewide campaign that will deeply impact their school community. Those two building reps were Kindra Stevens and me, Katie Ford, from the Harford Academy, and this is our story.

As the statewide organizers of The ESP Bill of Rights shared the stories heard at the statewide listening sessions, Kindra and I could hear the voices of our friends and colleagues saying the same things. The Harford Academy is the separate public day school in Harford County, serving students ages three through twenty-one (3-21) with severe and profound special needs.

We have nineteen (19) classrooms in our school with at least two Education Support Professionals (ESPs) in each. Our school hosts two (2) Future Link classes, for students on a certificate track who have completed four years in their home school and qualify for additional work skill training to prepare them for life after school. Each of these classes has two (2) dedicated paraprofessionals who function as both classroom instructional staff and job coaches. There are also two (2) STRIVE classrooms at the Harford Academy which operate with a one-to-one ratio of students to adults to allow for Intense Structured Teaching. The Harford Academy is also home to the offices of Infants & Toddlers, who serve children birth to age three (3) providing vital early interventions.

Long story short, all these classrooms and programs can only thrive and function thanks to the dedication and hard work of a LARGE number of ESPs, whom we call "support staff". As Kindra and I heard the presentation about the ESP Bill of Rights, we looked at each other and said, "We HAVE to share this with our WHOLE staff". We knew that this groundbreaking idea was much bigger than Union membership and needed to be shared with all of our colleagues to bring awareness to three important facts:

- You are not the only ones feeling this strain.
- You are not alone in the fight to make things better, and
- Supporting the ESPs at your school, supports all ESPs.

The goal of the ESP Bill of Rights is to show superintendents, school boards, county councils and other local and state officials that not only are ESPs standing up for their rights, but their certificated colleagues and administrators are standing with them. Once the Harford Academy staff unanimously voted to endorse the ESP Bill of Rights, with our principal and assistant principal being the first to sign, we knew there needed to be a next step.

Who better than parents to lend their voice in support of ESPs and the incredible work they do and the need to protect their rights?

Parents know the value of excellent ESPs caring for their children's physical, emotional and academic needs. They need to be made aware of the disparities that are facing their children's greatest resource. This is why Kindra and I requested the opportunity to present the ESP Bill of Rights to the Harford Academy PTA.



Harford Academy Building Reps Katie Ford, Kim Mayforth, and Kindra Stevens holding their signed ESP Bill of Rights. They had so many signatures, they had to add another sheet to the middle.

continued on next page...

Parents are important stakeholders in our schools and a valuable resource for addressing local and state politicians and decision makers. Imagine the impact that this document could make if not only school employees, but also PTAs and other community members also endorsed the ESP Bill of Rights. This is why we would like to encourage you to share this campaign with the PTA at your school. The presentation doesn't need to be complicated; it just needs to be meaningful. The presentation that we gave was only about five minutes. We started with a definition of ESP, since parents may not be familiar with the education lingo, a brief description of how the list of rights was created (statewide organizing team and listening sessions) and reading the ESP Bill of Rights. We started at the last right ("Right to a Union") taking turns reading each right and the brief description. We finished by counting to three and shouting the first right, "A Living Wage" together. We called for a vote and the members present voted unanimously to endorse it. The presentation concluded with a call to action, encouraging the parents to share the information with others in the community, relatives, neighbors, and friends, to continue the spread of support.

Kindra and I understand our building situation is unique. Most building representatives do not have the opportunity to work with the vast number of ESPs that we do. Some schools may not have a building rep team that includes both certificated and ESP staff. That said, one thing is true, we ALL have benefitted from the work of ESPs. The kind front office secretary who helps you fix the copy machine. The reliable custodian who comes running with extra paper towels when a class project goes awry. The trustworthy bus driver who lets you know how a student is feeling first thing in the morning. There are countless examples of the extraordinary work of the individuals who claim the title of ESP and it is time for us to show them the support they deserve. If you are unsure of how to structure your building meeting or presentation to your school's PTA, please reach out to Kindra and me; we are ready and willing to help.



Pictures of Harford Academy Parent Teacher Association (PTA) voting for the ESP Bill of Rights. Schedule a meeting with your staff, administration, and PTA about the ESP Bill of Rights



We have something for everyone!

Complete the Committee Interest Form

IMPORTANT INFO

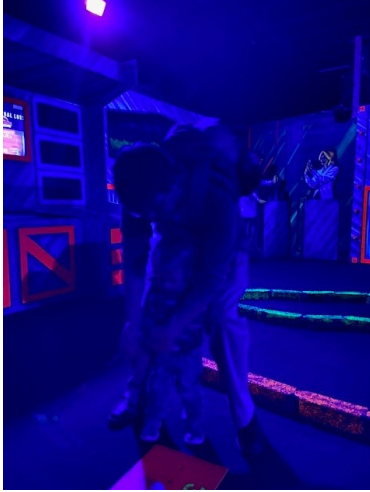
Keep these documents handy

Certificated
Negotiated
Agreement

ESP Negotiated
Agreement

HCEA COVID MOU

HCEA *in the* Community



HCEA members visited Jurassic Golf on HCEA's Family Night. It's always fun to spend time with fellow members and get to see members' children enjoy themselves. There's nothing like a night of dinosaurs, mini-golf, video games, and unlimited cookies and pizza to keep kids (and members) smiling.

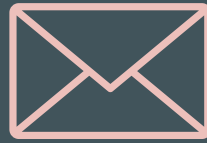


Government Relations

We have held 2 very successful lobby nights with many of our Harford County Delegation. We have let them know our priorities with current legislation and our objections to others. Thank you to all those that took time out of their busy schedules to join us.

We will have at least one more lobby night before the end of session. We are hoping to revisit some legislators and try to meet with others that we have not yet seen. Watch your email for more information as we get closer to the end of the month.

Do you know who your representatives are? Don't be afraid to contact your legislators and tell them what matters to you! [Click here](#) and type in your address to find out who your reps are and how you can contact them.



COUNTYEXECUTIVE@HARFORDCOUNTYMD.GOV

EMAIL COUNTY EXECUTIVE BOB CASSILLY

AND TELL HIM TO:

FULLY FUND THE HCPS BUDGET

OUR STUDENTS CANNOT AFFORD UNDERFUNDED SCHOOLS

- KEEP EDUCATORS IN THE CLASSROOM
- KEEP CLASS SIZES SMALLER
- KEEP IMPORTANT PROGRAMING FOR STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH
- INCENTIVIZE EDUCATORS TO STAY IN THE PROFESSION
- KEEP HARFORD A HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

TELL BOB CASSILLY WHAT CUTS TO THE SCHOOL BUDGET
MEAN FOR YOU, YOUR STUDENTS, AND YOUR FAMILY!



Harford County Education Association

OUR SCHOOLS DEPEND ON IT!



The Rainbow Connection is a feature brought to you by the LGBTQ Issues team, a sub-committee of the Human and Civil Rights Committee. We are working to develop materials so our members can be better allies to each other and how to support our LGBTQ+ students. We will share resources for educators on supporting our LGBTQ+ students. The LGBTQ+ Issues Team is open to ALL members regardless of orientation or gender identity.

We asked our Building Reps and members:

How do you make your classroom inclusive for ALL students, regardless of who they love, where they're from, or what they look like?

“ I try to build relationships and get to know each kid's personal story from the 1st day. ”

” I tell kids I'm always listening and always have an open door. ”

“ When kids bully or use a derogatory term in class, especially the word "gay", I immediately address it. I want to normalize discussions about how to have respectful discourse. ”

” Instead of saying "ladies and gentlemen" all the time, I use more inclusive terms like y'all, friends, and scholars. ”

“ I have an awesome set of inclusive and diverse posters around the room. I display flags from all around the world, and as an ELL teacher, I allow students to speak in their home languages with their classmates. ”

“ As an elementary music teacher, I include examples of music from many cultures , styles, and genres. I also work to include composers who are women and people of color ”

March is Women's History Month



Looking for some resources to teach your students about Women's History? Don't forget to talk about some of the amazing women in history who lived and worked right here in Harford County. Check out the resources about the [Forgotten Women Programmers at Aberdeen Proving Ground](#).

Maryland's Women's Heritage Center has great mini-biography of women in Maryland who have done and continue to do the extraordinary. They have a dedicated section to [Maryland Women in STEM](#).

And NEA has some great resources for lessons about Women's History [HERE](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 7: LBGTQ Issues committee meeting

March 8: HCEA Board of Directors Meeting

March 9: HCEA Organizing Comm. meeting

March 16: HCEA Rep Assembly

March 21 and 29: BR Training

March 31 : HCEA Social at Coakley's



Summer Employment For Faculty

Now Hiring:
Area Supervisors,
Pool Managers,
FT/PT Lifeguards
Positions
(Swimming Skills Required)



Contact David Watts at
dwatts@drdpools.com

HCEA

SPRING (BREAK) IS (ALMOST) HERE!

Come celebrate (almost) making it to Spring Break
with HCEA at Coakley's in Havre de Grace.



Friday, March 31, 2023

414 St. John's Street, Havre de Grace, MD

4:00-6:00 PM

RSVP HERE



If you need assistance, please contact your HCEA UniServe Director.

Liz Jones: 410-353-9692
ejones@mseanea.org

Will Suggs:
wsuggs@mseanea.org

NEED HELP ?

HCEA School Split 2022-2023

Will Suggs wsuggs@mseanea.org 240-653-7638	Liz Jones ejones@mseanea.org 410-353-9692
1. Bel Air High School 2. Bel Air Elementary School 3. Bel Air Middle School 4. Emmorton Elementary School 5. Homestead/Wakefield Elementary School 6. Fallston High School 7. Fallston Middle School 8. Forest Hill Elementary School 9. Forest Lakes Elementary School 10. Harford Glen 11. Hickory Elementary School 12. Jarrettsville Elementary School 13. Red Pump Elementary School 14. Youth's Benefit Elementary School 15. Joppatowne High School 16. Joppatowne Elementary School 17. Magnolia Elementary School 18. Magnolia Middle School 19. Riverside Elementary School 20. North Harford High School 21. Dublin Elementary 22. Norrisville Elementary School 23. North Bend Elementary School 24. North Harford Elementary School 25. North Harford Middle School 26. Youths Benefit Elementary School 27. Darlington Elementary School 28. C Milton Wright High School 29. Fountain Green Elementary School 30. Churchville Elementary School 31. Prospect Mill Elementary School 32. Southampton Middle School	1. Aberdeen High School 2. Aberdeen Middle School 3. Abingdon Elementary School 4. Bakerfield Elementary School 5. Church Creek Elementary School 6. George D. Lisby Elementary 7. Halls <u>Cross Roads</u> Elementary School 8. <u>Rove</u> -Williams Elementary School 9. Swan Creek School 10. Edgewood High School 11. Edgewood Elementary School 12. Edgewood Middle School 13. Deerfield Elementary School 14. Old Post Road Elementary School 15. Patterson Mill High School 16. Patterson Mill Middle School 17. William S. James Elementary School 18. Ring Factory Elementary School 19. Havre de Grace High School 20. Havre de Grace Middle School 21. Meadowvale Elementary School 22. Havre de Grace Elementary School 23. Harford Academy 24. Harford Technical High School 25. Central Office 26. Harford Glen

If you are asked to attend a meeting that may be disciplinary in nature and would like your UniServ Director present, please contact us right away. If your UD isn't available, you can ask to have the meeting rescheduled when your UD is available.

However, if admin refuses to reschedule, **you must go to the meeting** so you do not face discipline for insubordination.

Just state that you will take notes and write down questions that you will answer after conferring with your rep.

THANK YOU EDUCATORS!

Harford County school employees are eligible for Freedom's **Golden Apple Program**.

- ★ \$100 BONUS for joining
- ★ Earn 3.00% APY* with our Empower Checking
- ★ Earn 2.50% APY* with our Educator Savings Program



Federally Insured by NCUA



HCEA MEMBERS: Protect Yourself!

IF YOU ARE INJURED AT WORK:

1. Report it to your supervisor
2. Document the injury completely
3. Seek medical attention from the doctor of your choice
4. Call us at (410) 769-5400 to discuss your legal rights!

Solely reporting the accident to the county **WILL NOT** protect your rights!

Protect your rights by filing a workers' compensation claim with the State of Maryland.

Contact us today at (410) 769-5400 to protect your rights!



NEA Approved!

BERMAN | SOBIN | GROSS
FELDMAN & DARBY LLP
Attorneys at Law

www.bermandarby.com

HCEA SPONSORED LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE

- ✓ Offering **long-term care insurance** to HCEA members and their families.
- ✓ Helping members protect their hard-earned assets.
- ✓ Giving members a way to remain in control of their healthcare choices.
- ✓ Providing members with peace-of-mind.

For a no obligation consult and quote,

Contact: Michael Markowitz - 410-455-0680

Mike.Markowitz@acsiapartners.com

