

NOV/DEC 2023

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Official monthly newsletter of Harford County Education Association

From the President:



Colleagues,

I have been visiting schools recently with our UniServ Directors, Will and Liz. It has been nice to speak to so many members. I appreciate you openly sharing your struggles and celebrating your accomplishments with us. Please know that I value your input and am always willing to listen. Your willingness to share and celebrate with us directly impacts our advocacy. You may not realize it, but you are helping shape our advocacy and the decisions made at the negotiations table.

Per our request, the Board of Education has planned an Engage in Education session for employees only. This event is scheduled for December 11th from 5:30-7:30 in the Patterson Mill Middle/High School auditorium. This is your time to tell Board leadership your story and advocate for what you need. We must pack the house, so even if you are uncomfortable speaking, please plan to attend. HCEA has t-shirts for attendees who need one. Please complete [THIS FORM](#) and let us know if you are planning to attend.

Thanksgiving and Winter break will be sneaking up on us. Please take time to recharge and reconnect with family and friends. Every person that HCEA represents is an educator; as you know, being an educator is exhausting. I know it sounds cliché, but we cannot properly care for our students without caring for ourselves. You earned the breaks; enjoy them!

We will continue to demonstrate what it means to be a part of a union and to have solidarity. We will remain stronger together. And most importantly, when times get tough, we'll lean on each other and support our union siblings. We will not rest until every student has access to high-quality public education and school employees feel supported to do their jobs. That is what it means to be a part of this Union. We are Union strong!

HCEA is all of us, and we strive to find something for everyone. Committees are great ways to get involved; sign-up information is on page five. Please join us at our next social event on December 15th. The details and sign-up form are on page nine of this newsletter. Connecting with our union siblings is always a great time.

Thank you for all that you do. I appreciate you.

Chrystie Crawford-Smick



ESP Perspectives

Cindy Poper, ESP Vice President
Bel Air Middle School

Happy Thanksgiving!

We are quickly approaching the holiday season and all the craziness that brings, both personally and in our schools.

I know this year has been extremely challenging already for many of us, for a variety of reasons- staffing shortages, student behavior, coverages, and injuries included. Your stories of these challenges need to be shared with the people that have the power to make the changes that we all need to see. Consider speaking at a Board of Education meeting, and tell your story. If that isn't your thing, send an email to the Board with your story and what you believe you and your students need. The Budget season is just around the corner, and we need the people that know the most to share and explain why we need the things that we are asking for.

As we approach the holiday season, please take time for yourself. Relax, recharge, and celebrate. Spend time taking care of yourself, and recharge your soul. Spend time with those that are important to you. Both you and your students will be better for it as we move forward.

Wednesday is Education Support Professional Day!

Thank you for everything that you do in our schools and for our students every day. We know the critical role you play in the success of our students and your vital contributions to student well-being and school climate.

Please take a moment and celebrate yourself and your fellow ESPs for the essential role you have in our schools.

We appreciate you and all you do.

#rESPeCt#WeLoveOurESPs #ESPDay2023



Know Your Contract: Assault Leave

In the past several years, educators have seen an increase in injuries related to assaults from students. Regardless of the reason for the assault, we want you to know what steps to take to ensure you have the proper amount of leave so you can heal. Both by Maryland law and through our contract, you are entitled to assault leave if you are injured by a student. Please follow the steps below in the event of an assault injury, especially if it is a head injury.

- Call your UniServ Director as soon as you can.
- Immediately report the injury to administration through an incident report and a referral if necessary.
- Seek medical treatment through urgent care or your doctor. If it is a head injury, get treatment immediately. We receive many reports of educators who have been hit or punched in the head returning to class to finish the day only to find they had a concussion. Sometimes, educators don't notice concussion symptoms like migraines, extreme light and sound sensitivity, and ringing in ears until hours after the assault, after adrenaline runs out. When at urgent care, tell them you were injured on the job. This means Workers' Compensation (WC) insurance will pick up the bills associated with your treatment. While filling out paperwork, they will often ask for a Workers' Comp case number. However, if you were just injured, you may not have that case number yet. Instead, you can give them the billing address of Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), The address is: 621 Ridgely Ave., Suite 301, Annapolis, MD, 21401.
- Next, call our recommended Workers' Comp attorneys at [Berman, Sobin, and Gross](#). YOU DO NOT PAY FOR ANYTHING OUT OF POCKET. Worker's Comp attorneys are paid through the WC insurance programs and through any future settlements. We advise folks not try to deal with WC alone; the WC insurance adjusters for HCPS have been known to be difficult. The insurance adjusters at MABE are not working for you and your interests. They are working in the interests of the Board of Education. Having an attorney to deal with the daily hassles of WC will assure you get the best care, treatment, and any potential settlements for injuries. We also want to caution folks from using a different WC attorney. We've had many members end up switching to our recommended attorneys because they were not getting the help they needed from other WC firms.
- File a Workers' Comp claim. Be sure you have already called a WC attorney. They will help you through this step.
- Take the leave you need to heal. If you are injured as a result of assault by a student, you are entitled to WC leave AND assault leave. For WC leave, you will have 20 days of full pay without using ANY of your own leave. After 20 days, assault leave will need to kick in. HCPS requires staff needed assault leave to fill out THIS FORM. This must be done within 30 days of the injury according to HCPS policy.
- In review:

- 1: Call your UD.**
- 2: File an incident report.**
- 3. Seek treatment.**
- 4. CALL A WORKERS' COMP ATTORNEY.**
- 5:File a WC claim.**
- 6: Fill out HCPS's Assault Leave application.**



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@MSEANea.org.

42 members of the Harford County Education Association attended Maryland State Education Association's yearly Representative Assembly as delegates. We were the 3rd largest delegation in the state, with more delegates than some locals that are at least 3 times larger than ours. In addition, 3 of HCEA's members- Sabine Whitney, Monifa Nero-Tannis, and Lauren Weaver- presented courses on using Restorative Practices with different age groups and classes.

We showed our power and presence wearing aqua blue HCEA shirts that read "Harford Is Here" on the back. Delegates voted on New Business Items, changes to Bylaws, and heard from Governor Wes Moore. In addition, HCEA raised over \$2000 for the PAC, the political action fund that allows the union to endorse and support pro-public education candidates (remember, dues dollars CANNOT be used for political campaigns). HCEA was celebrated for the best membership plan in the state, a plan which brought HCEA's membership a growth of almost 10% in the last 5 years. When not in session, HCEA delegates took time to celebrate with one another with dancing and some late night fun.



Top left and clockwise: HCEA Delegates pose in their "Harford Is Here" shirts; Edgewood Middle Delegates George Kasnic and Kelly Fonger; Board of Director Abbie Bennett and member and Harford County Councilman Jacob Bennett with Donna Kasnic; Award for Outstanding Membership Plan; HCEA ESP VP Cindy Poper and HCEA President Chrystie Crawford-Smick pose with "PacSquatch" after winning an award for PAC contributions; Wes Moore brings people to their feet after his speech about seeing educators who see those in need.

BUILDING REP CORNER

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Top left and clockwise: The Whitney's finished our Little Library; Aberdeen Middle, Edgewood Middle, and Magnolia Middle delegates enjoy Seacrets; MSEA President Cheryl Bost at her last convention as president, HCEA takes time to eat in between sessions; HCEA members enjoy their time together; our honorary HCEA dance crew taking a break from the dance floor; HCEA leadership takes time to socialize with other locals and leaders





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.

HCEA's LGBTQ Issues Committee sponsored a booth at the 3rd Annual Upper Chesapeake Bay Area Pride Festival. HCEA volunteers helped festival participants design tote bags and collected information from 60 community members who have committed themselves to being our allies and to mobilize when we need their support.

Stay tuned for information about our upcoming book study with the LGBTQ+ Issues Committee using the book *Read This, Save Lives*, which we were able to purchase using a \$1000 grant we won last year. The LGBTQ+ Issues committee meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Contact Liz at ejones@mseanea.org for information on our next meeting.



Top left and clockwise: HCEA's LGBTQ Issues Committee members and volunteers at our booth; Edgewood Middle School GSA booth; community members filling out our HCEA Ally Cards; HCEA members having a blast on what turned out to be a beautiful day



Harford County Education Association

Members IN ACTION



It has been a busy month for HCEA, with our annual "Lost and Found" event at MaizeQuest and Local Officers Advance, where HCEA leaders attend sessions on best practices in leading the organization.

Check out Member Monifa Tannis's article from MSEA's Action Line!

ONE TEACHER'S TOOLKIT

Monifa Tannis

2nd Grade Teacher | Church Creek Elementary | Harford County
Harford County Education Association

Photo: Brian McCarthy Photography ©2023

FIND THE JOY IN THE JOURNEY

Teaching is like a roller coaster ride—there are many steep inclines and unexpected drops, sharp curves, and sudden changes of speed and direction as we journey. Like a roller coaster ride, it's a choice we made and the path we decided to take, so we could either scream the entire ride in protest or embrace the journey as we celebrate the highs and learn from the lows. There is always something to bring joy on this teaching roller coaster.

OUR ATTITUDE DETERMINES OUR DIRECTION

This is true in terms of approaching our students, their families, and even our administrators. If we perceive students as problematic or negative, and have a negative

attitude towards them, those students will meet or exceed those expectations. The same applies to working with families and administrators. A good attitude can bring restoration and strengthen our relationships within our teaching career.

CIRCLE UP Restorative community circles have also helped me to build my classroom culture. Circles help to create a safe space for learning and build a rich sense of support and community in the classroom. Each child has the opportunity to express their thoughts, questions, and concerns and is celebrated and embraced by the class community. Circles build relationships; foster critical thinking, self-control, and

conflict resolution; and build self-confidence and awareness of the community and the impact of our actions. When students feel safe and supported, they are more able to take intellectual risks with our content.

CONNECT BEFORE CHALLENGING

Children don't care what we are teaching them until they have connected with us and believe we have their best interests at heart. I find that it's easier to challenge and "push" students after we make that connection. Once they know that you acknowledge them as an individual, that you believe they are capable, and that you will support them in accomplishing their goal, they are more open to the challenge.

MISTAKES ARE PROOF THAT

YOU ARE TRYING Own your mistakes and learn from them. We are human and are not perfect. There is always going to be more to do and an area in which we can improve ourselves and our practice.

MY HAPPY PLACE

As teachers we give, and give, and give, and on days when feel we can't give anymore...we give some more. I have found that it is important to find what refuels me and add it into my schedule. Whether it's a night out with a friend, going dancing, a quiet getaway or a vacation, plan on it, pay for it, and then you will have to go! We need to add ourselves to our busy schedules and spend time refueling to get ready for the next ride.



IT'S TIME FOR THE HCEA

Ugly Sweater Social!



DECEMBER 15TH FROM 4:00 - 6:30 PM

Prost German Restaurant

102 N. Rogers Street
Aberdeen, MD



**CLICK HERE TO RSVP OR
SCAN THE QR CODE**



Prizes will be awarded for the top 3 ugliest sweaters

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 15: ESP Day

November 16: HCEA Rep Assembly

November 18: HCEA/MSEA Restorative Practices PD Day

November 20: HCEA Organizing Committee

December 2: HCEA NYC Bus Trip

December 14: HCEA Rep Assembly

December 15: HCEA Ugly Sweater Social at Prost in Aberdeen



Proud supporter of the
Harford County Education Association

Because you do all you can to help them grow, let us do all we can to help you grow, too!

Learn about our **U Educate Member Rewards Program**, designed exclusively for our education professionals.

November 28, 2023 7:00 a.m.

Register in advance for this meeting at the link below or scan the QR code:

<https://tinyurl.com/ye2x436z>



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

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

Will Suggs: 240-653-7838
wsuggs@mseane.org

NEED HELP
?

HCEA School Split 2023-2024

Will Suggs

wsuggs@mseane.org

240-653-7638

Liz Jones

ejones@mseane.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. Hickory Elementary School
11. Jarrettsville Elementary School
12. Red Pump Elementary School
13. Youth's Benefit Elementary School
- 14. Joppatowne High School**
15. Joppatowne Elementary School
16. Magnolia Elementary School
17. Magnolia Middle School
18. Riverside Elementary School
- 19. North Harford High School**
20. Dublin Elementary
21. Norrisville Elementary School
22. North Bend Elementary School
23. North Harford Elementary School
24. North Harford Middle School
25. Darlington Elementary School
- 26. C Milton Wright High School**
27. Fountain Green Elementary School
28. Churchville Elementary School
29. Prospect Mill Elementary School
30. Southampton Middle School

- 1. Aberdeen High School**
2. Aberdeen Middle School
3. Bakerfield Elementary School
4. Church Creek Elementary School
5. George D. Lisby Elementary
6. Halls Cross Roads Elementary School
7. Roye-Williams Elementary School
- 8. Edgewood High School**
9. Abingdon Elementary School
10. Edgewood Elementary School
11. Edgewood Middle School
12. Deerfield Elementary School
13. Old Post Road Elementary School
- 14. Patterson Mill High School**
15. Patterson Mill Middle School
16. William S. James Elementary School
17. Ring Factory Elementary School
- 18. Havre de Grace High School**
19. Havre de Grace Middle School
20. Meadowvale Elementary School
21. Havre de Grace Elementary School
22. Harford Academy
- 23. Harford Technical High School**
- 24. Central Office**
- 25. Harford Glen**
- 26. Swan Creek**

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
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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!



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- ✓ 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



We're still in need of HCEA Building Reps at Bakersfield Elementary, Darlington Elementary, and Norrisville Elementary. We will train you, and you won't be alone! If you are interested, please reach out to us!



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Learners: \$2,575

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For more information contact morgan.meadows@ace.edu.