

NOVEMBER 2025

Official newsletter of Harford County Education Association

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From the President:



Colleagues,

Thanksgiving will be here before we know it. I hope you have the opportunity to relax and unwind surrounded by family and friends. Being an educator in today's world is extremely challenging, so please take time for yourself as you reflect on all the people and things you are thankful for in your life.

In a time when our Board of Education meetings have become a circus and educators are constantly under scrutiny, solidarity is more important than ever. We can't stop our outreach and our advocacy. We can't stop looking for the right candidates and supporting them across the finish line. While these are challenging times, we will do what we have always done; stand up for our students and fight for our schools. We will show up in mass when necessary to push back on the bad decisions and the unjust actions of our elected leaders. We will educate the community about public education and why their support is necessary in this fight. We will not give up. Educators ARE the Union. We have many of the same goals, and working together is the only way to achieve them. We will continue to collaborate with all HCPS employee Unions because we are stronger together.

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 every school employee feels supported to do their job. That is what it means to be a part of this Union. We are Union Strong!

In the words of Fred Rogers, "We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say "It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem." Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes." Thank you for being someone's hero. I appreciate your commitment to our profession and our students.

With Gratitude,

Chrystie Crawford-Smick

Contract Spotlight



What happens if I
break my
contract?

This is a question we've heard a lot this year. We understand that educators are under tremendous pressure—class sizes are larger than ever, workloads continue to increase, and student behaviors are more challenging than in years past. It's no surprise that many are feeling overwhelmed and wondering about their options. However, before making a decision to leave mid-year, it's important to understand that breaking your teaching contract carries serious professional consequences.

Certification Suspension

The first and most immediate consequence is that your Maryland teaching certificate will be suspended for one year. During this time, you are ineligible to teach in any Maryland district. The suspension also prevents you from transferring your Maryland certification to another state. In other words, you won't be able to work as a certified teacher anywhere while the suspension is in effect.

Ineligibility for Rehire in HCPS

The second consequence is specific to Harford County Public Schools. Once you break your contract mid-year, HCPS designates you as ineligible for rehire—and this decision is permanent. Even years later, if you wanted to return to teaching in Harford County, the district would not consider your application.

Before You Make a Decision

If you're struggling, please don't make this decision alone. There may be options available to you that can help—such as leave provisions, transfers, or accommodations—that allow you to step back or adjust without losing your certification or future employment eligibility.

Before taking any action, reach out to your UniServ Director. They can walk you through your options, explain your rights under the contract, and help you make an informed decision that protects both your well-being and your career.

You're not alone in this—support is just a phone call or email away.

BUILDING REP CORNER

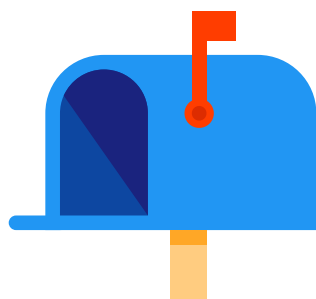
All building reps should have received updated membership lists. If there are inaccuracies, please send them to **Lisa Cover, HCEA Office Manager**, at LCover@MSEANea.org.



BULLETIN BOARDS AND MAILBOXES

The Association may place notices, circulars, or similar materials pertaining to legitimate Association business which clearly identify the individuals and/or organization responsible for the information contained therein, in the distribution boxes provided for teachers.

The Association may display notices, circulars, or similar materials pertaining to legitimate Association business on the tackboard in faculty room(s) which is designated by the principal of the school for such purposes. All material to be so displayed must clearly identify the individual and/or organization responsible for the information contained therein.



Did you know your contract guarantees space for Association communication?

HCEA has the right to post and distribute materials about legitimate Association business in teacher mailboxes and on a designated faculty room bulletin board.

If your building doesn't have a board, ask your administrator to set one up — or contact your UniServ Director for help.

Need a refresh? The HCEA office has bulletin board materials ready for you!

Let's keep our union visible and our members informed.



Members

IN ACTION

Harford County Education Association



MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMITTEE ATTENDED THE UPPER CHESAPEAKE PRIDE FESTIVAL IN HAVRE DE GRACE. THEY SIGNED UP DOZENS OF COMMUNITY ALLIES WHILE DISCUSSING BANNED BOOKS.



Healthcare Negotiations Continue: Standing Strong Together

All four HCPS unions are working together to secure fair, affordable healthcare for every employee.

This month, healthcare negotiations are in full swing. Representatives from all four unions that represent Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) employees continue to work together as one team to secure the best possible outcomes for all staff.

The four unions — **HCEA** (Harford County Education Association), **AFSCME** (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), **AHCATSP** (Association of Harford County Administrative, Technical and Supervisory Professionals), and **APSASHC** (Association of Public School Administrators and Supervisors of Harford County) — have collaborated closely to discuss, develop, and present a **single, unified proposal** that covers all employee units.

Having a united front gives us a stronger voice and a better bargaining position. When every employee group speaks together with one message, management hears that message more clearly: all HCPS employees deserve fair, high-quality, and sustainable healthcare.

Both sides — HCPS management and the four employee unions — have now presented their opening offers. By the time this article is published, the teams will have returned to the table for another bargaining session on **October 28th**. Negotiations are always a process that takes time, data, and determination. But through collaboration and solidarity, we're making sure the needs of all HCPS employees are represented.

Stay tuned for updates as healthcare negotiations continue — **together, we're stronger.**



Education in Session

There's Power in the Primaries

When it comes to shaping the future of our schools, the most important election in Harford County might not be the one you think.

In Maryland, you have to be registered with a political party to vote in that party's primary. And since Harford County has historically elected only Republican County Executives, the Republican primary is effectively where that decision is made. This means that for educators who care deeply about school funding, class sizes, and working conditions, the most powerful vote you can cast may be in the primary—not the general election.

This year, there will be multiple Republican candidates running for County Executive, including the current officeholder who has repeatedly failed to fund our schools at the level our students deserve. The next County Executive will set the tone and priorities for education in Harford County for years to come—and educators need a voice in who that person will be.

If you're not currently registered with a political party, or if you're unsure, take a minute to check your voter registration status at voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch. From there, you can confirm your registration, update your party affiliation, or make any needed changes.

Key dates to remember:

- Voter registration deadline: Tuesday, June 2, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.
- Primary Election Day: Tuesday, June 23, 2026
- (Missed the deadline? You can still register in person on Primary Election Day.)

Encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to check their registration too—every educator's voice matters in choosing leaders who value and invest in public education.

Our collective voice is strongest when we all take part.



treasurer's corner: making cents

More Than Dues - Discover the Fun and the Benefits

By Tracy Papinchock, Treasurer



Hello members,

With the first dues deductions for this year starting with the November 7th paycheck, now is a great time to explore how to maximize the benefits of your membership.

Start locally by attending HCEA events! We host a variety of gatherings throughout the year—many of them family-friendly—where you can enjoy free admission to activities, food, drinks, door prizes, and the chance to connect with colleagues and friends.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming socials:

- November 10th - Happy Hour at Looney's from 3:30–7:00 p.m. Join us for a celebration of unity and fun! Each attendee will receive a drink token. We'll have prizes, drinks, food, and plenty of good company. [RSVP HERE](#)
- December 12th - Ugly Sweater Social at MaGerks, 3:30–7:00 p.m.
- Coming this winter and spring: legal seminar, ice skating, Jurassic Golf, and more!

Another valuable resource for members is the [NEA Member Benefits website](#).

Through NEA, you have access to:

- Financial services, including student loan programs, retirement planning, and personal loans
- Insurance options for health, life, auto, and home
- Travel and retail discounts
- Professional development, legal assistance, and disaster relief

Your membership is more than just dues—it's a way to connect, grow, and make the most of what HCEA & NEA have to offer. I hope you'll take advantage of these opportunities and join us at an event soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 4: HCEA Board of Directors

November 10: Solidarity Social

November 13: HCEA Representative Assembly

November 17: HCPS BoE Meeting

November 27-28: Thanksgiving Break - HCEA Office Closed

*You're
Invited!*

Union Unity

Solidarity Social

& celebrate Chrystie's birthday!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH

3:30-7:00 PM

LOONEY'S

312 S. MAIN STREET, BEL AIR

Food! Fun! Prizes! And More!

Bring non-perishable food items to
receive additional raffle tickets.

Scan the QR code or
click here to RSVP!



Proudly hosted by:



Harford County Education Association



ESP Members - we want to hear from you! As we head into a full contract year, your opinions will guide our negotiations. Please help us by completing [this survey](#).



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 BSG Law at 800-827-2667 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 BSG Law at 800-827-2667 to protect your rights!

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- 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



Join HCEA on our Annual...

Don't miss out on the fun
reserve your seat today!!



Ticket Prices:

\$65.00

Members/Non-Member

**** Tickets may only be **
purchased by a HCEA
members.**

Bus Schedule

Date: Saturday, 12-6-2025

Departure Time: 7 a.m.

Departure Location: Bel Air HS

Arrival Location: Time Square

Leaving Time Square: 7 p.m.

Returning Bel Air HS: 11 p.m.

NYC Big Apple Adventure™

• • •

**Let us do the driving. All you
have to do is simply enjoy the
ride and plan your day of
adventure. Whether you decide
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show on Broadway this trip
will be one you will never
forget.**

• • •

Buses will depart Bel Air HS and drop everyone off at
Times Square. Return location will be the same as
drop off. Please be on time.

**LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE
FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE. THERE WILL BE
ASSIGNED SEATS THIS YEAR.**

**SEATS ARE NOT GUARANTEED UNTIL
PAYMENT IS RECEIVED**

Please bring your DVDs for the bus

HOW TO BE AN



AWESOME REP 201

TRAINING INCLUDES:

- ✓ Organizing your Building
- ✓ Representation
- ✓ Real-World Examples
- ✓ Roleplay

NOV. 18 | 5-7 PM

**LATITUDES, 5 BEL AIR SOUTH
PARKWAY, BEL AIR, MD**



RSVP HERE:

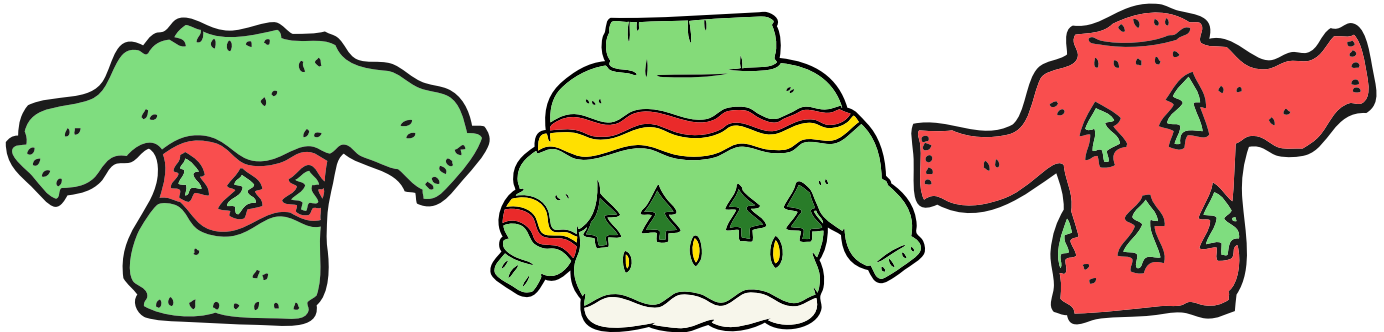


**THIS IS FOR BUILDING
REPS WHO HAVE
ALREADY ATTENDED A
TRAINING**



HCEA'S ANNUAL

Ugly Sweater Social!



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

**3:30-7:00PM | MAGERK'S PUB & GRILL
120 S. BOND STREET, BEL AIR, MD**

**Raffles, Games and MORE!
The Best Ugly Sweater Wins a Prize!**

RSVP

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/HCEAUGLYSWEATER](https://bit.ly/hceauglysweater)

OR SCAN QR CODE





ace.edu

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Enter for a chance
to win a \$25
Amazon gift card!

For complete raffle rules, see
ace.edu/contest-rules

Quality Education You Can Afford

American College of Education (ACE) is an accredited, online college with programs in education, business, healthcare and nursing. Headquartered in Indianapolis, ACE offers over 60 doctoral, specialist, master's and bachelor's degree programs for adult students, along with graduate-level certificate programs.



Doctorate

Ed.D. in Leadership:
\$24,810*

Specialist

Ed.S. in Curriculum and
Instruction: \$12,660*

Master's

M.Ed. in Special Education:
\$9,976*

M.Ed. in Early Childhood
Education: \$9,109*

M.Ed. in Literacy: \$9,109*

Bachelor's

Education Studies: \$8,370*

Certificate

Principal Preparation:
\$6,219*

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For more information contact marlena.wiley@ace.edu.

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Membership eligibility applies.

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

**Allison Heintz: 410-816-5025
aheintz@mseane.org**

NEED HELP?

HCEA School Split 2024-2025

Allison Heintz
aheintz@mseane.org
410-816-5025

- 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. Royce-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**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DISCIPLINE MEETINGS

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. According to both contracts, you must be given at least 2 business days to get representation.

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.