



Pequannock Township Education Association

CHALKBOARD

June 2011



~President's Message~

Colleagues,

As I write this, there are only 15 days until summer! I am looking forward to summer this year, as a time to recharge my batteries and to continue my education in advocacy and member rights.

Your Local, State, and National Associations have been faced with unprecedented challenges this past year, and we expect to face more, as the present year moves forward. Public sector billionaires with no experience in education have, unbelievably, been given jurisdiction over education. The new Common Core Standards adopted by the State have been funded and developed, in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: a group which has no background in education, curriculum development, or teaching.

We read daily about "Miracle Schools" under "reformers" like Michele Rhee, that have magically improved test scores by tying scores to teacher evaluation - only to find that the reality behind these schools is that scores were falsified, answers were erased and re-written, correctly, and that numbers were manipulated to give the impression of success. This occurred all at the expense of genuine student learning.

And this "Billionaire Boys Club" has attempted to redefine our profession, as well. They are working to challenge our years of experience, destroy our job security, and most importantly silence our members, so that any word we speak in our defense is considered "greedy", "unprofessional" or "thug"-like.

These groups are interested in the business of education, not in the education of children.

I ask all of you, as members, to educate yourselves, this summer, by reading not just the newspaper and media "spins" on our profession, but by also reading literature put forth by groups who are working to support our professional rights. The more information you have, the better you will be able to counter misinformation.

Truth will not be silenced.

We will not be silenced.

I also encourage you to plan to attend the NJEA Convention, in November (I know that sounds like it's a number of calendar pages away, but it's closer than you think!). Diane Ravitch, former Assistant Secretary of Education and Counselor to Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander under George H.W. Bush is a tireless advocate for teachers and children. She will be the keynote speaker at the conference.

At the end of June, your local Delegate Assembly members, Laura Higley and I, will be traveling to Chicago for the NEA Representative Assembly Conference. We will sit in and vote on several issues that pertain to national education policy. We are very excited to meet with our colleagues from throughout the country, and we are honored to be representing Pequannock.

Also, in August, eight members of your Representative Council/Executive Board will be attending NJEA Summer Leadership Training in East Brunswick. We will be attending workshops on topics such as advocacy, grievance, insurance and pension and legislative issues. We will report when we return in September.

Finally, your negotiations team met for three hours on Sunday, June 5th, to review more of the final details for the ratification package we hope to have available very soon. Please see the negotiations update in this issue of Chalkboard.

I wish the best of luck and health to all our retirees.

I wish you all a safe, healthy, and restful summer.

Lee Ann Brensinger

~A Note from Your Vice President, Ann Marie Finnen~

As the school year draws to a close, I would like to thank all of our association members for their hard work and dedication. As educators and education support professionals, our jobs are vitally important to society. I am proud to be a colleague of such outstanding members of society.

I would also like to thank you for supporting the various PTEA community outreach initiatives that took place this year. Your generosity during our food drives and gift card drive to benefit the Pequannock Food Pantry spoke volumes. Looking ahead, we are planning to sponsor a Blood Drive in the Fall. Please stay tuned for more information and plan to participate if possible.

Many of us have had difficult a year for a variety of reasons. Certainly the attacks on our profession and on our livelihood are disheartening and frustrating. Throughout it all, however, I have been so thankful for my union, and for the strength I feel in our solidarity. I invite you to become involved more directly with your association. There are several open positions throughout the district and you can make a difference by contributing your talents and your voice to the work of the PTEA. Enjoy the summer; stay strong and I look forward to working with all of you in September.

~Legislative~

Lillian Keating (PV)

By now you have heard of the Sweeney/ Christie pension and benefit proposal that will cost you thousands of dollars from your hard earned paycheck. If it passes, it will cost you a greater percentage of your paycheck with each salary increase. At the least, you should be emailing your legislator to articulate what you think of this proposed bill. At most, you should attend the rally on Thursday, June 16th. If you are unable to go to the rally, don't think this fight is over. We need to be mobilized to protest in Trenton each time this legislation is discussed which may be on June 20, 23, 27 and 30. Stay tuned to www.njea.org to find out when and where you can support opposition to this bill.

~PRIDE~

Jamie Dean (NB) and Karen Schiffel (SJG)

It certainly was a year full of PRIDE! Through PRIDE we were able to share our good news with the community and have a bit of fun ourselves.

We started in September and moved through until June with:

- Releasing a Welcome Back Ad
- The HoDown -- MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 9/17/11 AND 9/18/11 (Rain date)--SAVE PICTURES TO BE DISPLAYED
- Veteran's Day Celebration (SJG)
- Elementary School Conferences
- Thanksgiving Feast (HV)
- High School Yearbook Ad
- Hearle Village Musical Holiday Performance (SJG)
- PTEA Website
- Little League Sponsorship
- Friends of Education
- Chili-Cook Off (PTHS)
- Read Across America
- Hearle Village Tea (SJG)
- Run for Marge Sponsorship (PV)
- Teachers' of the Year Ad
- Intergenerational Prom
- SJG Kindergarten Program
- Grade 5 Recognition (SJG)
- Morris County Poster Contest
- DON'T FORGET THE MALL PROJECT

Thank you to all participants!

~Instruction and Professional Development~

Janelle Heisse (PV)

As this school year draws to a close, don't forget to total your professional development hours for the year. There are many ways to accrue hours towards the 100 hours requirement besides simply attending a workshop. All of these activities count, providing they are mentioned in your PDP and you keep good records:

- Serving on a professional board or committee, up to 10 hours per year, provided that the service is identified in your PDP with the specific goals of the service outlined therein
- Mentoring or having a student teacher (one hour for each week of supervision)
- Working with a practicum (pre-service) teacher: 3 hours per semester
- Giving a workshop for others: You can count 2 hours of preparation time for each hour you present, the first time you present a workshop. If you give that workshop again during the five year cycle, you cannot claim that time again
- Taking formal college classes: 15 hours per credit
- Developing curriculum, including writing, research, and revision counts hour for hour
- Any course taken to maintain your license or certificate (school nurse, social worker, etc.) counts hour for hour, but you can only count these hours once during a five year cycle

- Independent Professional Studies: These count hour for hour: PLCs, action research, study groups, lesson study, textbook review, sabbaticals, internships, portfolio development, online workshops and programs, and contributions to professional literature. You should keep a log of time accrued this way.

On June 16, 2010, New Jersey adopted a resolution calling for New Jersey’s curriculum standards to be aligned with national Common Core Standards in Math and Language Arts literacy.

The [Common Core Standards](#) is a state-led initiative that aims to establish basic, uniform education requirements across the country. It is sponsored by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, and many states besides New Jersey have adopted them.

The standards will be phased in over time, and curriculum development began this past school year. The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) for math and language arts are now called the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The State Board’s resolution “directs that school district curricula for all students be aligned with these revised K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects,” according to the phased-in timeline.

If this affects the subject matter you teach, we suggest adding a sentence to your 2011-2012 PDP that reads “Familiarize myself with the new CCSS and NCCS in order to effectively implement instruction”.

We encourage all members to take advantage of the Professional Development Activities offered by Morris County in conjunction with NJEA.

The following workshops were offered by the Morris County Council of Education Associations in 2010-2011:

- IPD Consortium: Professional Learning Communities
- Cyberbullying
- Response To Intervention
- MCCEA IPD Overnight:
 - Using Data To Enhance Student Learning
 - Differentiated Lesson Planning
 - Special Ed. Today
 - Elementary Classroom Mgt. Pt. 1
 - Elementary Classroom Mgt. Pt. 2
 - Succeeding With Difficult Students for ESP
 - The Successful Secondary Classroom
- Gang Awareness
- ESP Brunch
- Time Management for ESP
- Titanic

Thank you for attending the
 Ratification Meeting on Wednesday.
 Please remember, AS PER THE
 PTEA CONSTITUTION, WE WILL
 HAVE A WRITTEN BALLOT
 VOTE THREE DAYS AFTER THE
 MEETING. ALL MEMBERS WILL
 BE VOTING **MONDAY, JUNE
 20TH** IN THEIR OWN
 BUILDINGS. If you know you will
 be out of the district on Monday and
 would like an absentee ballot, please
 contact Lee Ann Brensinger, Ann
 Marie Finnen, or Helene Zablacki as
 soon a possible.

~Insurance~

Laura Higley (PV/PTHS)

Remember, Health Benefits change from CIGNA to NJ DIRECT 10 effective July 1.

Our health benefits and pensions are at stake due to proposed NJ State legislation. It is vital for you to stay informed on this fast-moving issue.

<http://www.njea.org/news/2011-06-10/sweeney-christie-pension-and-health-benefit-reduction-bill>

You should always check the NJEA website for the latest information. If you thought the 1.5% salary reduction negatively affected your family's ability to pay your bills, then this newest proposed legislation should alarm you. With summer coming, it is essential for you to stay in the loop. Be sure that your AR has your contact information, and continue to read these Chalkboard articles.

You can find out exactly how your pension benefits account stands at any given time by accessing this information on the web. If you have never accessed this information before, you will need the employee number from your pay stub. Go to <http://www.nj.gov/> and register with this site. Once you have registered and you log in, click on the button on the left for MBOS https://www1.state.nj.us/TYP_MBOS/ser_Login_Mbos and you should have arrived at your pension home page. Through this site, you can view pension amounts, designate a beneficiary. This is the web site you use to apply for retirement benefits once you have declared your intention to retire.

~MCCEA~

Diane Wolfe (NB) and Bill Vivino (HV)

- ❖ TPAF-Teachers Pension and Annuity Fund Annual Convention will be held on October 22, Lee Ann and AnnMarie will be attending
- ❖ Tri Co now offers a credit card and check card. They include points for givebacks on purchases. Check out: www.uchooserewards.com
- ❖ Proposal for sick day cap has changed from \$15,000 to \$7,500
- ❖ The Urban Ed committee Conference will be held on November 18 & 19th Topics include leadership, and Core Content Standards
- ❖ Pension and Health Benefits bill will be heard by the Senate Budget Committee on Thursday, June 16. Additional hearings are expected on other Mondays and Thursdays in June. Members are needed to attend these hearings. Visit www.njea.org for more information.
- ❖ November 19th- Professional Development Forum / Data collecting on student analysis
- ❖ 2011 Technology Integration Institute Workshop will be offered this August 2nd and 3rd at The Richard Stockton University <http://www.njea.org/news/2011-05-25/tech-it-out> for more info on graduate credits and Prof Dev hours
- ❖ NJEA convention committee will be offering assistance to members with young children
- ❖ The Department of Education is piloting a new teacher evaluation and merit pay program in several districts throughout the state. We are waiting to hear which districts will be participating. It is possible that the program might violate a local's collective bargaining agreement.

~Member News~

Congratulations to Christina Vivino (PV) who became engaged to Joe Occorso! The wedding is planned for Feb 17, 2012.

Nancy (Wicks) Mugan (NB) who just got married on May 28, 2011. Congratulations!

Congratulations to our PTEA President, Lee Ann Brensinger, who was just hired as a part-time Uniserv Consultant by NJEA!

~Professional Development Teams~

Elections were held Friday, March 25, 2011 for some terms on the PD teams. Congratulations to the new members and the re-elected members of the Pequannock Township Professional Development Teams.

PTHS

Laura Higley
Helene Zablocki
Lee Ann Brensinger
Ted Loeffler

PV

Lillian Keating
Erin Postman
Jennifer Mildner

NB

Yvette McBain
Karen Rusiniak
Leslie Ulrich
Jerry Cammerata

HV

Mary Raczko
Marie Raimondo
Elissa Scillieri
Linda Thompson

SJG

Kelly McHugh
Ann Marie Finnen
Michele Mazzola
Gina Coffaro



NJCTY Forum at
Pequannock Township High School
with Yvette Mc Bain

www.njcty.com

“Positive Communication for Quality Education”

A forum was held at Pequannock Township High School on May 19, 2011 by the New Jersey County Teachers of the Year. This forum offered educators, administrators, Board of Education members, government officials, and community members the opportunity to positively collaborate to improve the quality of education. Positive and professional communication concerning student achievement is what drives this new organization. Please visit the website above website to learn more about this newly formed teacher-led initiative. Thank you, and congratulations, to PTEA’s own Yvette McBain (NB) for her contribution to the New Jersey County Teachers of the Year.