

Haverhill Education Association News

800 Broadway #3, Haverhill, MA 01832

Tel.: (978) 372-7079

www.facebook.com/HaverhillTeachershaverhill.massteacher.org

HavEd@verizon.net

Lisa Begley, President – Ted Kempinski, 1st Vice President – Anthony J. Parolisi, 2nd Vice President

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President's Corner

President Lisa Begley

ESPs Ratify Contract, Receive Retro Pay

Our MTA Representative Meghan Werner typed up the new contract for us. I have signed it and am waiting on approval from Bill Cox, the School Department's lawyer. The new pay scales for ESPs have been posted on our website (haverhill.massteacher.org). ESPs should have received retroactive pay in their May 27th pay check. If you see the number one on your paystub for summer school or Discovery Club it represents the whole year, not one hour.

Secretaries Inch Closer to Contract

The last meeting between representatives from the Clerical Unit and the School Committee took place on Tuesday, June 1st. A tentative agreement is being taken back to the School Committee to see if other members not present at the negotiation session would support it. Watch your emails throughout the summer for more information regarding these negotiations.

Evaluation Grievances Advances

The School Committee rejected our grievance regarding the current evaluation system. We still have not received a letter stating why the grievance was denied. The HEA has filed for arbitration of the grievance. This is important for every teacher. We want the administration to come back into our rooms within twenty days of a "needs improvement" to see our improvement rather than waiting for the formative or summative evaluation. We are concerned that the way administration currently views the evaluation document we would not be able to prove our growth and would be more likely to keep a needs "improvement" rating.

Grievance Connecting Several Issues at Elementary School Advances to Level III (School Committee)

Some assistance has already been given by the administration to relieve the stress affecting a teacher at one elementary school; however, we are still looking for further remediation on the issue, which now moves on to be heard by the School Committee.

Labor Relations Violations

1. Our first labor relations violation case (Secretarial Unit Clarification) has been scheduled for a hearing in Boston in the first week after school gets out.
2. Other labor relations violations have been filed but not yet had a hearing date assigned. These filings are related to a Weingarten Rights violation, special education testing, and one other Secretarial Unit position.
3. A potential violation exists with regard to mandatory grading policies throughout the district. To be heard, we must demonstrate the impact these policies have on our working conditions. I have been stating our case but I need more assistance. Please speak to your building representatives with specific details so that they can bring your thoughts to our next meeting.

HEA, School Committee Reach Agreement Over Retired Teachers in Classrooms

The HEA and School Committee have negotiated an agreement that phases out the use of retired teachers in the classroom by the 2017-2018 school year, avoiding arbitration. The agreement allows the district to hire one (1) retired teacher in each department to teach not more than two (2) classes during the 2016-2017 school year. Tutors will not be considered the same as a classroom teacher and will not have more than six (6) students at one time for tutorial purposes.

Kukenberger leaves Haverhill for Scarborough, ME

Assistant Superintendent Julie Kukenberger has accepted a position as Superintendent in Scarborough, Maine. She will be presenting her exit plan to the School Committee this month. I'm sure we are all wondering if we will keep the Lucy Calkins writing program or not. If we do, will we finally get the training that was promised to us?

Annual Budget Approved – New Line Items, Dues Increases

1. This year's HEA budget includes up to \$75 each for five (5) ESPs to attend the annual MTA ESP conference next year. (More info to follow for requirements to apply)
2. The budget also includes up to \$75 each for five (5) new teachers (any teacher with less than four (4) years teaching experience) to attend the MTA new teachers conference next year. (More info to follow for requirements to apply)
3. Local dues have increased by the following amounts annually: teachers, \$12.50; secretaries, \$14.24; and ESPs, \$7.95. These local dues increases bring all units back up to the percentages identified in our bylaws.
4. This year's MTA dues increase will include a one-time \$30 assessment in support of the Save Our Public Schools campaign (see next item).
5. The next newsletter will have the total dues including those for the MTA and NEA (the NEA has not yet notified us of next year's dues).

Save Our Public Schools Campaign

As mentioned in the previous item, the MTA voted to add a one-time \$30 assessment to this year's dues in support of the Save Our Public Schools campaign to keep the cap on charter schools. Currently, the Haverhill Public Schools lose \$2,807,927 a year to charter schools (excluding Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School). The remaining funding for the campaign is coming from the NEA, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the MTA reserve fund. For more information, visit www.saveourpublicschoolsma.com

District Evaluation Committee Meetings Continue

The good news is that many teachers from around the district are attending these meetings now. During the first half of the year they had only been attended by Anthony Parolisi and myself (other than administrators) as the administration did not instruct the principals to invite teachers from their buildings to join our team at first.

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President's Corner (from p. 1)

With Mrs. Kukenberger leaving we have not made a lot more progress in the area of evaluations. We continue to impress upon the administration that greater training would be appreciated. For example, not all schools received the information on the power elements that would be focused on for this year.

School Committee Meetings and Silver Hill Board of Directors Meetings

I, or another member of the Executive Board, and concerned teachers continue to attend all of the Haverhill School Committee meetings to keep informed on the issues of the district that the committee is informed about. I have also started attending the Silver Hill Board of Directors meetings that are held monthly. I have only attended two of them so far, but have added them to my schedule of important meetings to attend. Next school year your building representatives will be asking you to join us based on a rotating schedule. This will help all members to stay better informed on the issues that affect our students and us.

SchoolBrains Training Still Sought

I sent the message to Superintendent Scully that we could not come up with only a few items and that we would want fundamental training for SchoolBrains and the overall use of the program for the beginning of next school year. It seems like the program is being built as we go. A big thank you goes out to the administrators that tried to learn the program themselves to help others – yes, we did have several that tried to help as best they could!

High School Room Changes

High School teachers, I hear your concerns, however, please remember that this is not part of our contract and as such the union does not have any control or leverage in this situation (which classroom you are assigned) just as we do not have control over which school a teacher is assigned to at other levels. After meeting with Mr. McLaughlin a plan was put in place to assist teachers with this move. Boxes are being provided and the custodial staff will manage movement of all school supplies. Please refer to the staff email that was sent out with specific directions.

Condolences

Wishes of comfort and peace are extended to:

- *Jen McCarthy for the loss of her mother-in-law.*
- *Mary Krikorian for the loss of her mother.*

Congratulations!

- to Megan Bedow on the birth of her newborn son.

- The Teacher Contract**
- The ESP Contract**
- The Clerical Contract**
- The Evaluation System Language**
- Past Newsletters**
- Links to Benefits**
- The HEA Bylaws**

ALL THIS AND MORE ARE ON THE WEB

haverhill.massteacher.org

**We want to hear from you! Share articles, tips, photos, advice from the classroom, and more on our Facebook page!
facebook.com/HaverhillTeachers**

Changes for Next Year – Things to Think About

1. We have notified a middle school principal regarding a proposed Response to Intervention (RTI) initiative that the notion that lunch and prep time could be shortened to accommodate is not correct. Please remember that you are entitled to a 30-minute duty-free lunch period. Any changes to our prep periods for assignments, responsibilities, and time are changes to our working conditions!
2. HHS will be looking into the advisor/advisee program. They are aware that we need to be a part of the planning of this program. I have started looking for volunteers to be a part of this process. Please let me know if anyone has a strong desire to get involved!
3. Do you know of any changes in your school that should be the subject of impact bargaining? If your working conditions have changed then the answer could be “yes”! Let your building representative or a member of the executive board know. If they want our input they will include us in the process from the beginning. Remember, it can't be with only select members of the teachers unit to enable these changes. We would all need to vote on it as we are a union! Some changes can be for the improvement of all. Let's be a part of the process!

Non-Renewal Letters

1. *Teachers* must receive a letter of non-renewal by June 15th.
2. *ESPs* can only be non-renewed for “just cause” after their fifth (5th) year of service.
3. If you are an ESP and have less than five (5) years of service the district does not have to renew your contract.

In solidarity,
LISA

KNOW YOUR WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

You have the right to union representation during investigatory interviews. According to the Supreme Court in *NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc.*:

- 1) The employee must make a clear request for union representation before OR during the interview. The employee can not be punished for making this request.
- 2) After the employee makes the request, the employer must choose from among three options.
 - a. grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee
 - b. deny the request and end the interview immediately
 - c. give the employee a choice between having the interview without representation or ending the interview (you should never choose this option!)
- 3) If the employer denies the request for union representation and continues to ask questions, it commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. The employer may not discipline the employee for such a refusal.

When being interviewed by administration, if you feel the discussion could in anyway lead to disciplinary action invoke your Weingarten Rights by saying, **“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting.”** *Clip and keep this Weingarten Card handy – you never know when you might need it!*

2016 Banquet and Scholarship Presentation



left: 2016 Scholarship Winner Julia McLaughlin with HEA President Lisa Begley and parents Dave McLaughlin and Ellen Sullivan (photo by Anthony Parolisi)
right: HEA President Lisa Begley presents Julia McLaughlin with the 2016 HEA Scholarship Award (photo by Tim Coco/WHAV)

Thank You Message from Julia McLaughlin

The following message was written in a card sent by Julia to the members of the Haverhill Education Association:

Dear Haverhill Education Association,

Thank you very much for choosing me as this year's scholarship recipient. I am beyond grateful that I was chosen. Thank you all for seeing my excellence in extra-curricular activities as well as my character. Thank you for the time put in by teachers and members to make this scholarship possible. But most importantly, thank you for all for being such great teachers!

*Thank you,
Julia McLaughlin
Class of 2016*



(photos by Anthony Parolisi, except second from last by Deb Church – for more, visit our website at haverhill.massteacher.org)

Important Message About Health Insurance for Members Not Returning for 2016-2017

Anthony Parolisi, 2nd V.P.

Colleagues,

While this is an issue that affects only those members who have chosen to resign their positions (excluding retirees) and those who have been issued a letter of non-renewal, the Executive Board feels it is important for all our members to be aware of just how health insurance deductions are being applied by the School Department towards your insurance premiums. For background, this issue first came to light last summer, as a number of teachers who had found employment elsewhere for the fall were told that since they were not returning to the Haverhill Public Schools, they would need to pay the district the necessary premiums to cover the month of August or risk losing health insurance coverage for themselves and their families until their new employer-provided coverage took effect. Through our inquiries with the School Department, we discovered that the schedule the School Department uses to apply the deductions to the annual premiums leaves members "behind" in their insurance premiums even after rates increase in the last two paychecks. Those members who return "catch up" when deductions resume in the fall. Members who do not return are required to pay this deficit – an amount upward of \$300 in some cases – or purchase COBRA. Naturally, the HEA does not think that any member contemplating a change of scenery, nor one who was not given a choice, should have to worry about making this payment or going without health care coverage for a month.

When we brought our concerns to the School Department it was evident that this was simply how things had been done without anyone bringing it to our attention for several years. However, with the assistance of our representative from the MTA, our research leads us to conclude that, by law, the 20 health insurance deductions should cover an entire year's premiums from September through August (12 months) and be deducted in a single school year so that no such deficit exists over the summer. Currently, deductions taken between September and June cover a 12-month period from August through July, with the first month being paid in arrears upon our return to school. For nearly a year, the HEA has tried to engage the School Department to develop a solution, but the administration has been exceedingly slow to react to our concerns. When last we heard from Human Resources Director Tim Rooney, 10 months after the issue was first brought to his attention (and over two weeks ago as of press time), his only response was to cite the same information we received from his office several weeks after we first initiated contact. For clarity, Mr. Rooney's explanation of how deductions are applied and the impact it will have on those members who do not return in the fall is printed below. If you are seeking or have already found employment elsewhere, or have been issued a letter of non-renewal, please direct any questions regarding your health insurance coverage to Tim Rooney by emailing trooney@haverhill-ps.org or calling 978-374-3400. The HEA will continue to engage the School Department and explore all options for resolving this issue in the future. Stay tuned for future updates and please report all problems to your building representative or any member of the Executive Board for assistance.

"Anthony,

The medical and dental benefit deductions are taken from 20 paychecks and each deduction covers a period of 18 days. Deductions are paid in advance and cover a period of the summer months. During the summer break no deductions are taken. Deductions resume in the fall and the deductions are eventually caught up and then again paid in advance.

The paycheck issued on May 27th covers the insurance through July 18th.

The paycheck issued on June 10th covers the insurance through August 5th.

For the time period of August 6th - August 31st (or whenever the new insurance will begin), the former employee can continue the insurance under COBRA. You have 60 days from the date the insurance ends to elect COBRA. The former employee could elect and pay for COBRA during this time period only if the coverage is needed.

Tim"

Timothy M. Rooney

Director of Staff and Student Services

Haverhill Public Schools

978-374-3400

Executive Board Contact Information

President Lisa Begley: 603-303-7778 / lisa.begley.hea.president@gmail.com

1st V.P. Ted Kempinski (grievances/contract violations): 978-837-2080 / tedkhea@gmail.com

2nd V.P. Anthony Parolisi (newsletter, scholarship, website): 978-914-3146 / anthonyparolisi@gmail.com

Secretary Jeff Blaustein (elections, bylaws, email list): 978-289-2796 / jbandkb14@gmail.com

Treasurer Jill Perkins-Bouchard: (finances, membership/dues) 978-914-2930 / heatreasurer@gmail.com

ESP Unit Rep. Lois Silva: 978-373-0083 / jsilva@gmx.com

Secretarial Unit Rep. Patti MacRae: 978-478-7065 / p.macrae@comcast.net