

Hudson Teachers' Association

HTA OFFICERS

President: Jack Beyer

1st Vice President: Jen Clark

2nd Vice President: Justin Cukerstein

External Secretary: Julie Coryell

Internal Secretary: Ellen Huemmer

Treasurer: Lucy Rees

Assistant Treasurer: Anna Barletta

Public Relations: Victoria Dougherty

Building Reps

JLE

Melissa Brown
Kim Cruger

MCSIS

Marlene Parmentier
Tani Quinion

JHS

Carey Ann Daniels
Emily Goldstein

HHS

Brian Palmieri
Wayne Kinney

Negotiations Committee

Melissa Brown, JLE
Terry Ohl, JLE
Lisa Dwyer, JH
Jen Clark, JH
Chuck Peters, JH
Mike Antonelli, HS
Justin Cukerstein, HS

A Letter from the President

By Jack Beyer, HS

PRIVACY LAW IN SUMMARY

The teacher evaluation privacy law protects teachers' legitimate right to privacy. The law does not totally prohibit the release of all information that may be provided to parents and what districts and the State Education Department must make available to the general public.

Districts must, upon receipt of a parent's or legal guardian's request, provide specific evaluation information, subject to various conditions. Districts are required to make reasonable efforts to verify that any request received is a bona fide request made by the parent or guardian who is entitled to the evaluation information.

Only the previous year's final rating and composite score of any classroom teacher to which their student is currently assigned may be released. This means that only the HEDI rating category and the composite score (0 -100) score may be shared with the parent or legal guardian who has made the request. The district may not disclose teacher sub-component scores.

All other teacher specific evaluation information including APPR forms or documentation, such as rubric scores and notes for the 60 percent Other Measures of Effective Teaching Practice are confidential and under the privacy law is explicitly "not subject to disclosure."

Most importantly, the privacy law expressly states that SED and each school district must ensure that any evaluation data released does not include "personally identifying information" for any teacher. This means that the evaluation data cannot be released by SED or a district if it is possible for someone to connect a rating with individual teachers. This is more than just removing names. For example, if a school has 3 fourth grade teachers and they all receive the same rating, you would not need to know their names to know the rating, you would need to know the ratings of these 3 teachers. In this scenario, the data cannot be released as it automatically provides "personally identifying information," namely the identity of all three fourth grade teachers and their evaluation rating.

DECEMBER 9TH: A NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO RECLAIM THE PROMISE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

December 9th is an opportunity to raise our voices in unison and to connect NYSUT's ongoing campaign to support public education in New York State with the growing national movement.

NYSUT is calling for fair funding for public schools and colleges. A three- year moratorium on high stakes consequences of state standardized tests and a renewed focus on teaching and learning, not testing!

Wear the color blue on Dec.9th in solidarity and support for public education.



Contract Corner

By Lisa Dwyer, JH

Do you belong to a professional education organization? The District agrees to reimburse any member of the bargaining unit for a maximum of fifty (\$50.00) dollars for dues in professional organizations of an educational nature. Such reimbursement must be requested in accordance with applicable District policies regarding reimbursement. Refer to Article on pages 5 through 6 and District policies 6000 fiscal management.

APPR-Review the APPR Timeline. Monitor student progress and collect evidence. Refer to Appendix G and H for types of evidence.

Egypt Comes to Life

By Tani Quinion, IS

Third grade students in Mrs. Quinion's class recently studied Egypt as a unit. One of their projects was to learn the process of mummification by wrapping a life size mummy. The students also participated in Egyptian day where they made various projects to further their knowledge of the unit. Some of the activities included making papyrus paper, canopic jars, sugar cube pyramids and mini sarcophagus'.



FREE YOGA CLASSES

Tuesdays @ 4 pm

HHS Room T119

Bring a yoga mat & water

Want to share something great going on in your classroom? Next newsletter will be in March and I'll be looking for submissions! Save your stories and photos!

APPR Committee

*Jack Beyer-
President*

Terry Ohl, JLE

Melissa Brown, JLE

Tani Quinion, IS

Lisa Dwyer, JH

Chuck Peters, JH

Wayne Kinney, HS

Feeling the pressure? Get vocal!

By Jen Clark, JH

With the onslaught of the Common Core, APPR, SLO's, and the incessant testing that is plaguing our schools, many of us are feeling overwhelmed and deflated. Venting behind closed doors helps us all to validate the wrongs being imposed upon us, but it's about time you start taking some action!

There are several ways that you can become active in fighting NYSED

and make your voice heard. To start, there are several Facebook groups that you can join to become informed about the different issues plaguing our schools. You don't have to comment on anything, and you can simply read and learn more about the plethora of educational issues going on statewide. Some groups include New York BATS, Lace to the Top, and NYS Refuse the

Tests.

Make sure to download the NYSUT Member Action Center on your smart phone. It allows you to quickly fax your legislators, senators, congressman, and even the governor in seconds!

Subscribe to Diane Ravitch's blog & check out www.nysape.org for more information on how to speak up for teachers and students.

Festival of Wreaths

By Vicki Groat



The PTA at John L. Edwards has been very active this year and is under the leadership of both teachers and parents. This cooperative effort has produced a Fall Costume Ball attended by over 400 parents and students and is now in the midst of organizing the Festival of Trees and Wreaths which will take place Friday, December 13th at the school. Over 40 wreaths decorated by teachers, classrooms, community businesses and the principal adorn the halls and cafeteria at JLE. Don't miss your chance to win some of the very creative wreaths covered in toys, school supplies, gift certificates, candy.... You may choose to visit the school the Night of the Winter Walk –Dec 7th from 5-7, during school hours or the evening of the festival when the hallways of the school will be decorated with themed trees decorated by classrooms from 6-7:30. Tickets for the wreath raffle are 4 for a dollar. Don't miss the festive event.

Heartfelt Story of Success

by Tara McSherry-Wolfe

I'm pretty sure that most of you know that the major portion of my job is supporting the Homeless students in our district. Each year, the number of children (birth through 12th grade) identified as Homeless hovers around 200 by the end of each school year.

Many times I share with you the sad stories of what our Homeless families face as they struggle to "get ahead". This story is a heartening story about one of our families. Following is a thankful "Thanksgiving" story.

Last year, a mom spent several months "Homeless" with her two children in a hotel. They were in the hotel for Thanksgiving. The family received a home-cooked turkey dinner and all the fix-ins from a donor, so they were able to enjoy a family feast. (As I have shared with you, there are no cooking facilities in the hotel rooms except for a badly functioning small microwave.) Shortly thereafter the same donor facilitated this family obtaining affordable housing and they were able to leave the hotel.

The first year after a family obtains housing is a very challenging time. Many families do not succeed at maintaining their housing. Support for recently housed families is integral to their success.

My colleagues and friends (that is you) supported this family during this critical first year. There was an Olympia gift card donated (for Mom to buy cleats for her son's 18th birthday); there were scrubs donated (so Mom had appropriate clothing) for her to wear for her new job as a CNA; there were household items and furniture donated; gift cards for Mom to purchase Christmas presents.

Mom had repeatedly told me last year that when she was on her feet again she wanted to provide a Thanksgiving meal for a Homeless family. Well, true to her word, this Mom contacted me earlier this month to make arrangements to do just that. Mom shopped for groceries to provide for TWO families this year. Her original intention had been to prepare the meals for families in hotels; however, Mom is currently undergoing radiation and chemotherapy treatments and is not physically able to do the cooking. She is very disappointed that she was not able to do the prep work for the families, but the joy and satisfaction that was written all over her face when she gave me the groceries was a "sight to behold".

Thank you to all of you who have made this possible.

YES Program Going Strong

by Tara McSherry-Wolfe

This is the 7th year of the YES program and it is going strong. To date, we have had over 125 graduates of the program. In reviewing the data for a recent grant application, I learned that all of the graduates of YES have also completed Graduation from our school district. Of course that is only correlational data but still I like the "odds".

YES is run completely by volunteers. All of the staff members that attend the weekly YES meetings and also the staff members that volunteer to be workplace mentors for the interns are doing this on their own time. I am always amazed at the generous nature of my colleagues!!!

This year has the highest number of students attending YES. As of the third class, there are still 56 enrolled students. There will be a great need for workplace mentors when the students successfully complete the 12 classes and get placed in their internship sites. This will occur sometime in March/April.

I am always looking for volunteers to come to the classes on Tuesday afternoons as well. The class occurs in the High School Library on Tuesdays from 3 to 4:30. Please come by for part or all of the class. All of the students have to complete a "mock job interview" in front of the whole class. We love to have "volunteers" complete the job interview. COME ON DOWN!!!!

With the larger number of students, I will be looking for additional work sites for them to complete their internships. Please keep that in mind when you are frequenting our area businesses. Scope it out and see if they are interested in participating in our YES program. There is no expense to the business. A grant pays the interns their stipends and the employer receives 36 hours of free help. The employer also gets the opportunity to help mold and shape the students into successful employees. Certificates of Insurance are provided to the businesses by the school district's insurance company.

From time to time I send out a listing of the students who are participants in the YES program. Look over the list and take a minute to encourage and congratulate the students.

Book Festival Author Visits JLE

By Melissa Brown, JLE

On October 7, 8 and 9, author Jeanette Hopkins visited JLE Primary. Ms. Hopkins is the author of *The Ladybug Waltz* and *The Juggler*. She has attended the Hudson Children's Book Festival and is a favorite author to many of our students.

Ms. Hopkins visited every classroom at JLE. She read aloud from one of her

featured books, explained the origins of the stories she's authored and some of the writing process, and shared some original artwork. The kindergarten students made a ladybug visor, and the first and second grade students received their own juggling balls and got to practice juggling.

Ms. Hopkins and her

husband donated their time and supplies to make this opportunity available for the students.



WELCOME BACK!

Sharon Hart, JH

Paying Kindness Forward

By Lisa Foronda, HS

Have you heard the buzz about The Kindness Cart? Ms. Foronda's High School Life Skills class is having a blast with this unique work study program. Students brew donated Strongtree Coffee and distribute student made goodies throughout the campus. While it is free, donations are accepted to sustain the carts operation.

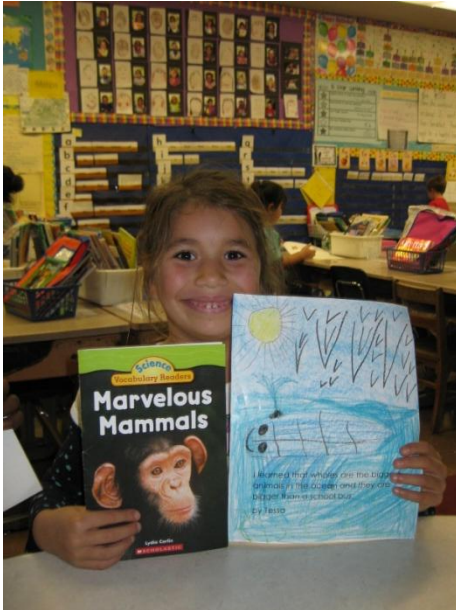
Recently, the Junior Class donated their bake sale leftovers to the cart. In return, the Kindness Club donated profits earned that day. Wait...it gets better. When the Kindness Club presented the Junior Class with the cash donation, the Junior Class officers surprised the Kindness Club officers with brand new winter gloves. The Kindness Club participates in a volunteer work study every Tuesday at Tomorrow Animal Rescue Farm. Now that it is getting colder, the gloves will certainly come in handy.

The Kindness Club is holding two fundraisers this month. All proceeds go towards helping send students to the NYS Special Olympics, the McKinney Vento Kindness Closet, and other Life Skill development activities. They are selling Strongtree Kindness Blend Coffee with mugs starting at \$10 per set. The club is also auctioning off 10 gift sets of various items to help raise money. Bidding will close on December 16th for the auction items. For more information, please email Ms. Foronda.

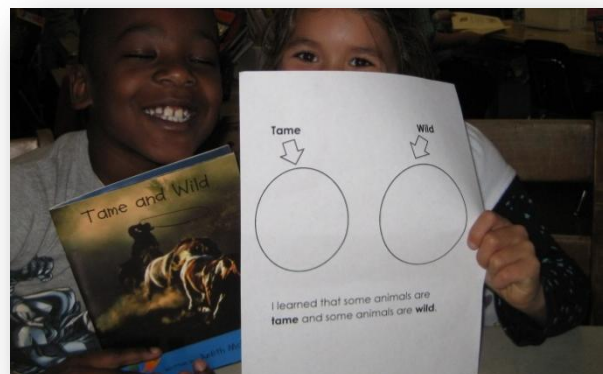
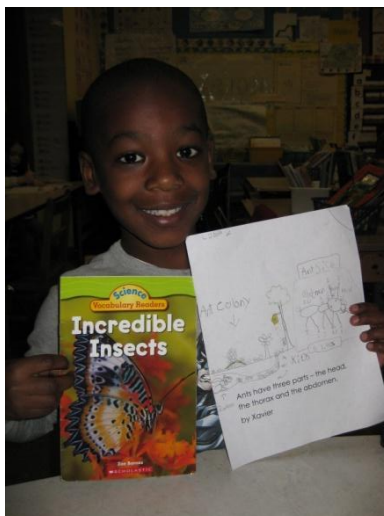


First Grade is Rigorous and Fun!

By Melissa Brown



As we work to incorporate the Common Core and the Six Shifts, we strive to maintain fun and interest in the first grade classroom. Reading about animals is always of high interest. In this writing lesson, students read and listened to nonfiction books about animals. Students were prompted to retell and then write one fact they recalled from the many text selections that were read aloud. Students were guided towards including academic vocabulary that they learned during the readings. Finally, the sentences were 'published' and then illustrated by the students.



4th grade trip to the Van Allen House in October



Photos provided by Jill Hanley



In an effort to help our community and the students of the Hudson City School District, HTA members recently volunteered to run the concession stand at the Pop Warner games. It was a huge success, and the parents were able to watch their children play the entire game. A huge thank you to all those who volunteered their time for these events!

HTA Members

Lynn Dykeman, Lisa Dwyer, Angie Hickman, and Jennifer Clark



HTA Members

Tom McDonald, Beverly Hayles, Brian Capuano, and Alicia McCagg



HTA Members

Emily Cukerstein, Laurie Campbell, Matt Campbell, and Janet Brust

Justin Cukerstein for his photography!



Don't forget the 10/10 HTA Raffle which helps to provide scholarships to students who wish to become teachers! See your building rep to make your contribution!



Student Council meeting in session at HHS in Shannon Factor's room

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Holiday Recess
Dec 23-Jan 3

Return January 6th

**GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 10th
Intermediate Building**



The Hudson Elks Club presented dictionaries to all third grade students. Pictured above is Ellen Huemmer's third grade class.

We're on the Web!

www.hudsonteachersassociation.com

A financial safety net for NYSUT members & their families

Long-term care insurance pays for services that aren't covered by Medicare or traditional health insurance but are important when you can't fully take care of yourself.

You may think it's unnecessary since you have no plans of ending up in a nursing home or requiring assistance for basic daily activities. The fact remains, though, that none of us can predict what's going to happen in the future.

This is where long-term care insurance comes into play – helping to pay the high cost of custodial care and other long-term care expenses that a long-term illness or injury can bring.

That's why the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust is excited to be back in the long-term care business with the endorsement of New York Long-Term Care Brokers.

With this endorsed program, NYSUT members and their eligible family members have the opportunity to receive a 5% to 10% discount on various plans.

With regional representatives throughout New York state and beyond, eligible individuals have access to long-term care insurance plans from multiple highly-rated insurance companies – including the New York State Partnership for Long-Term Care.

And with Americans living longer than ever today, the need for a financial safety net has never been greater. Through this endorsed program, eligible individuals can get a long-term care insurance plan designed with their specific needs in mind.



And don't automatically discount the cost of this type of insurance as it may be far more affordable than you may think.

If you or a loved one has been previously declined for long-term care insurance, you may still be insurable with a different company.

NYLTCB represents numerous long-term care insurance companies – all with different medical underwriting guidelines. Make sure to ask your long-term care insurance specialist for more details.

We encourage you to look into the cost of a long-term care plan tailored to your specific needs.

For more information about this endorsed offering, please contact NYLTCB toll-free at 888-884-0077. You can also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

