



The Montage

PEA's Newsletter

May 22, 2015

Volume 6, Issue 4



Thank you!

Neil Linville, President

The end of the 14-15 school year quickly approaches, and our calendars and to-do lists get busier and busier. However, I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on the impact you've had on our students and other professionals around you. Additionally, you already know that our association is comprised of many great teachers and professionals, but I wish to mention a few.

First, I'd like to acknowledge Danielle Brooking of Perry Academy. Danielle has served as PEA's 2nd Vice President for the past three years and has done a superb job. She decided not to continue her service as a PEA officer, but I know she will continue to serve as a leader among the teachers in her building and within our profession. Thank you, Danielle!

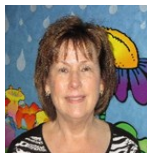
Succeeding Danielle as 2nd VP is Sue Buscemi of Winchester Village. Sue has served as a PEA building rep for some time, and we are very happy to welcome her as an officer. I am very excited to add her expertise and perspective as an elementary teacher to complement that of Kyle Hanefeld's (GV), which will only enhance our ability to represent all members.

As we approach summer break, PEA is focused on preliminary bargaining and will be working very hard this summer to negotiate the best possible contract. Matt Henninger (PMHS) has assumed the role of Bargaining Chair, and after meeting once with administration, he has already demonstrated a superb ability to represent teachers at the table. Stay tuned for information regarding bargaining throughout the summer. I would also be remiss if I didn't, once again, thank Steve Dawson for serving as Bargaining Chair the past two years. His work has provided a solid foundation on which Matt will build and continue securing the best contract under state law. Also, thanks to all of you, members, who took the time to complete the survey conducted. Your responses/comments were enlightening and provide us with clear direction in bargaining and discussion.

Thank you to Kyle Hanefeld for his continued work as Discussion Chair. Thank you, Chris Allen, for serving as our webmaster. Thank you, Mike Slack, for planning and facilitating two killer events for members, providing a time outside of school for fellowship. Thanks to Jackie Miller for her efforts in member benefits. Thank you to the PEA Building Reps. These leaders are the backbone of the PEA leadership, and **I encourage you to seek out your building rep to thank him/her for all he/she does for you.**

Finally, I need to acknowledge and thank ALL PEA members and staff members for their support and role in the recent successful referendum. We all recognized our students' facility needs, and by working together, we were able to convince our community of those needs. Thanks to you all and to our community!

The school year is ending, but there is still much going on, and your PEA leaders will continue representing you this summer. As your president, I am blessed and honored to work with a great team, who are listed at the bottom of this page. I am also honored to work alongside so many great teachers. Thank you for a great year, and have a restful and enjoyable summer break.



An Introduction

Sue Buscemi, 2nd Vice President Elect

I am Sue Buscemi, and I would like to introduce myself as your newly-elected 2nd Vice President of PEA. As I enter my new role beginning the 2015-16 school year, I know that I am filling big shoes with Danielle Brooking's departure from the PEA board. Thank you, Danielle, for your leadership, your example, and your service to our membership.

My entire teaching career has been spent in Perry Township, specifically at Winchester Village. I have taught third grade but am currently teaching kindergarten. I have served as the building rep for several years and have been honored to work on behalf of the W.V. membership. A few years ago, I stepped up my leadership role to serve on the Discussion Team. I have seen many changes in our profession in the 40 years I have taught, some very positive and others not so positive. I now look forward to expanding my leadership role in working collaboratively with our district membership and our district leadership to continue moving Perry Township Schools to the best we can be. As we move to closing another school year, I wish you a safe, restful summer break. Thank you all for your welcoming emails and comments and thank you for your confidence in me as I take on this new role.

PEA Leadership

- Neil Linville (PMHS), President
- Matt Henninger (PMHS), 1st V.P./ Membership Chair
- Danielle Brooking (PMA), 2nd V.P.
- Sue Buscemi (WV), 2nd V.P. Elect
- Steve Dawson (PMHS), Treasurer/ HSBT Board
- Kyle Hanefeld (GV), Secretary/ Discussion Chair
- Mike Slack, PEA Event Manager
- Jackie Miller, Member Benefits Liaison
- Chris Allen, Web-Master

Perry Education Association

P.O. Box 47432
 Indianapolis, IN 46247-0432
<http://www.perryea.org>
 789-4414, PEA Office

Special points of interest:

- **HSBT Health and Wellness Center**
6925 S. Harding Street
497-6140
- 24/7 Nurse Line (888-279-5449)
- **Anthem Member Services** (800-345-2460)



PEA Survey: We Hear You.

By: Matt Henninger, 1st Vice President

Our team has begun informal bargaining for our next contract. I wanted to thank those who took time to complete the pre-bargaining survey! The data collected will serve as a guide to our decision-making. Not only have we collected and analyzed data from the multiple choice answers, but we've also read and discussed each comment. We had a very representative sample from our membership complete the survey; members from all grade levels and experience levels participated almost equally. Out of the hundreds of members who took time to complete the survey, here are members' collective thoughts and feelings:

1. The overwhelming majority of members would like to have fewer formal evaluations each year.
2. The overwhelming majority of members feel as though their evaluation scores at least somewhat represent their effectiveness; an even larger majority of teachers feel as though their scores are relatively close to those of evaluators, be they slightly higher or lower.

3. Most members are not in favor of larger salary increases for younger teachers. Some expressed support of this idea. Some did not have a preference.
4. The overwhelming majority of members feel as though the minimum effective score should be somewhere between 2.26 and 2.5.
5. Almost every member expressed an interest in changing one thing about our current evaluation tool. Of the three ideas mentioned in the survey, here were the top three choices in order from greatest to least: fewer evaluations, adjust language in rubric, and allow self-scores to be reflected in evaluation score. All received substantial interest.
6. There is still a high level of anxiety regarding teacher evaluation. Based on hundreds of comments, there also seems to be a level of frustration.
7. Based on a large percentage of comments, many members still do not feel that our evaluation tool is being implemented and conducted in the same fashion across the district. Because of this, the data did not indicate support of differentiating pay for those rated Effective/Highly Effective.



The Dawson Monologue

By: Steve Dawson, Treasurer/HSBT Board Member

A Good Time to Plan for Retirement

Everyone is busy during the school year, and planning for retirement is often at the bottom of a long to-do list, if it is on the list at all. Summer is a good time to review your retirement accounts and to plan for a longer-than-eight-week break. PEA has bargained some of the best retirement benefits in the state, and teachers have some great opportunities. It is up to you to make the most of them.

To review: Perry Township contributes 5.6% or 6.6% (depending on years of experience) into a **401(a)** account with VALIC. You determine how the money is invested. Recently, you were allowed to buy mutual funds rather than annuities. If you have not converted to mutual funds, you probably should; almost all teachers will benefit by the change. Contact your VALIC representative for more information.

Teachers who receive a 5.6% 401(a) contribution also receive a 1% contribution to a **VEBA** account to pay for health premiums or costs in retirement. Again, you decide how the money is invested. The account is administered by Meritain. Visit www.indianabra.com for more information.

Perry Township contributes 3% of your compensation to your Indiana Public Retirement System (**TRF**) annuity savings account. You are allowed to voluntarily contribute up to 10% more. It is a great opportunity; the funds are secure and very well-managed. For information, visit www.in.gov/inprs/teachers.htm.

You are allowed to contribute up to \$18,000 (\$24,000 for those over age 50) into a **403(b)** account. Commonly referred to as an "annuity savings account," it may also be invested in mutual funds. You have a choice of seven vendors, some of which offer post-tax (Roth) contributions. The IRS also allows you to also contribute up to \$18,000 (\$24,000 for those over age 50) to a **457(b)** account. Investments can be only VALIC annuities.

You cannot control what the market does, but there are several things that you do control. Are you buying mutual funds or annuities? How much are fees and expenses? Are you buying managed or indexed funds? Are you investing pre-tax or post-tax (Roth). Is your asset allocation appropriate (ratio between stocks and bonds)?

I encourage you to learn as much as you can about the decisions that you have to make. If nothing else, consider converting your VALIC 401(a) account to mutual funds. For almost all teachers, it is the right thing to do.

Health Insurance News

Because the Harding Street Health and Wellness Center is operating at capacity, HSBT has, and will, open other wellness centers. The Speedway location is taking appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays, and an east-side location will open on Washington Street this summer. Use the 497-6140 phone number for all locations. Remember, there is no office visit co-pay when you visit the HSBT Health and Wellness Center.

A wellness coach is available at no cost to you to help with weight management, nutrition and fitness, tobacco use cessation, chronic conditions, and other health related problems. Contact the Health and Wellness Center for more information or an appointment.

Need a Medical Test or Procedure? Earn Up to \$500

The Hoosier School Benefit Trust (HSBT) recently added SmartShopper to help you save and earn money. If your physician orders a medical test or procedure, contact SmartShopper at 800-824-9127. If that procedure is one for which there is an incentive, and if you use the suggested provider, you will receive a cash incentive. The amounts range from \$50-\$500 depending on the test. For more information, go to www.vitalssmartshopper.com or read the email from Jennifer Dant sent on April 30.

PEA Building Rep of the Year

For those who don't know, each year PEA awards the Frieda Phelps Memorial Award to recognize our PEA building representative of the year. Frieda was a dear friend and staunch supporter of teachers and PEA who was taken from us several years ago. Frieda personified professionalism, strong character, and a giving nature, all of which are qualities looked for in our building reps.

This year's award recipient is **Amanda Colbert** of Mary Bryan. Amanda exemplifies the core values Frieda personified, and PEA is a better association for having Amanda as a leader. Congratulations, Amanda, on receiving this award, and thank you for your devotion to students, teachers, and our profession.



A MASTER TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

By: Nancy Tatum, PMA Master Teacher

There are many good things happening around the township. Here are just a few of the thoughts from Master teachers:

"We are developing a culture of student inquiry and discussion through the strategy of academic conversations." (Also known as Collaborative Conversations.)

"We are using the book *Academic Conversations* to guide us. Teachers are seeing great things from their students. It is very inspiring to watch the growth for both teachers and students."

"*Marzano's Six-Step Approach to Academic Vocabulary* creates a systematic instruction in important academic terms. Research has shown that when teachers, schools, and districts take a systematic approach to helping students identify and master essential vocabulary and concepts of a given subject area, student comprehension and achievement rises. We are seeing evidence that this is true!"

"I'd like to do a shout out to all of the teachers who have really embraced the process and are using it to improve their teaching for the betterment of their students."

From Master teachers, we say thank you for putting student achievement first.

PEA Scholarship Awarded to Keeler and Smith

By: Neil Linville

This year's recipients of the **Terry Rice Scholarship Award for Continued Excellence** in the Field of Education are Danielle Keeler of Southport High School and Rebecca Smith of Perry Meridian High School. Both students completed an essay explaining their passion for education and the pursuit of a career in teaching. They have also maintained a 3.0 GPA or higher. Each recipient received a \$500 scholarship to be used as needed.

Thank you to our members for allowing us to give back to students. Also, if you once had either or both of these students at one time or another, you might consider reaching out to them to congratulate them and wish them luck on their next educational journey.



Congratulations,
Danielle Keeler (SHS)!



Congratulations,
Rebecca Smith (PMHS)!