

## Insurance Changes

Be aware that changes to your pre-prescription plan will go into effect July 1, 2007:

- Co-pays on prescriptions will change from \$5 to \$5 for generic, \$10 for preferred list drugs, and \$25 for non-preferred drugs.
- It will become mandatory for members to use mail order for maintenance drugs after the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) re-fill.

This change was negotiated two years ago, but had a delayed implementation timeline. Medco will be sending out a notice in the future informing you of these changes. BEA and the Payroll/Benefits office will also hold a meeting in late May or early June to answer any questions you may have regarding how to use the mail order system

## Harding H.S.

Administration is committed to redesigning the programs at Harding H.S. The newspaper erroneously reported that teachers may have to reapply for their jobs. NOT TRUE!! After the BOE reconstituted Columbus School and had teachers reapply for their own jobs, the BEA filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) with the State Labor Board. The Labor Board upheld the BEA's contention that the BOE must follow the contract language when reassigning or transferring teachers. The language can be found in our contract starting on page 54. Because programs will be redesigned at Harding, the BEA is working with the BOE to ensure that the contract language will be upheld and the transition is as seamless as possible.

## Officers

Mary-Beth Lang

**President**

Gary Peluchette

**Vice-President**

Maria Nocerino

**Secondary Vice-President**

Victoria White

**Elementary Vice-President**

Herminio Planas

**Treasurer**

Tiffany Ladson-Lang

**Recording Secretary**

## **President's Message**

*Letter to the Editor appearing in the Connecticut Post*

*"In response to Richard Fewell (Letter to the Editor 3-22-07), it is rewarding to see so many citizens concerned with the education of Bridgeport students. The issues surrounding education are complex and impacted by many components outside the control of the school system. If the answer to urban education was easy, there would be nothing to discuss: but alas, there is no silver bullet.*

*Charter schools are an alternative that may work for some children, but upon closer examination their demographics show that they are not about educating all children.*

*If educating all children is what the increased support for charter schools is about, then I would ask for the following commitment from all*

*the citizens promoting charter schools:*

- *Equitable funding. Amistad spends \$3084 per student more than the Bridgeport Public Schools when you take into account the cost of special education.*
- *Transportation costs. Charter schools do not pay for their own transportation costs. These costs must be paid for by the local school district and currently cost approximately \$1050 per student for the approximately 475 students that attend charter schools in Bridgeport. The new Amistad plans have the school at over 700 students. That is a lot of money for transportation*
- *Equitable demographics. Amistad reflects a population with significantly fewer special education and English language learners than New Haven*

*Public Schools, the city in which Amistad is located.*

*It is not surprising that greater resources for less challenging students result in higher test scores. Amistad proves that higher spending with a student population that has fewer at-risk students is successful.*

*What is surprising and gratifying is that five Bridgeport public elementary schools achieved adequate yearly progress under ESEA (NCLB), and another seven schools reached 'safe harbor.' At a time when budgets and programs have been slashed throughout the district, the teachers, administrators, and support staff continue to do so much more with so much less. I hope the desire and interest in Bridgeport's Public Schools is truly about educating all children."*

## Disciplinary Meetings

If you are called into a meeting and it appears to be disciplinary in nature, you are entitled to union representation. If you are in a meeting and the meeting turns disciplinary, you may stop the meeting and request a union representative. If the administrator insists on continuing the meeting, do not be insubordinate. Take notes, say nothing, and call the grievance office immediately after the meeting. The union representative does not have to be the representative from your school. Call the BEA office (416-0055), and someone from the grievance office can represent you.

### Election Results-Congratulations

#### BEA Secretary

Tiffany Ladson-Lang

#### NEA/RA

Sharon Balkcom

Mark Improta

Tiffany Ladson-Lang

Carmella Lorusso

Gary Peluchette

Marie Petitti

Delphina Pinto

Herminio (Tito) Planas

Victoria White

Kathy Flaherty (as State Delegate)

Patrice Lundgren (as State Delegate)

Mary-Beth Lang (as President)

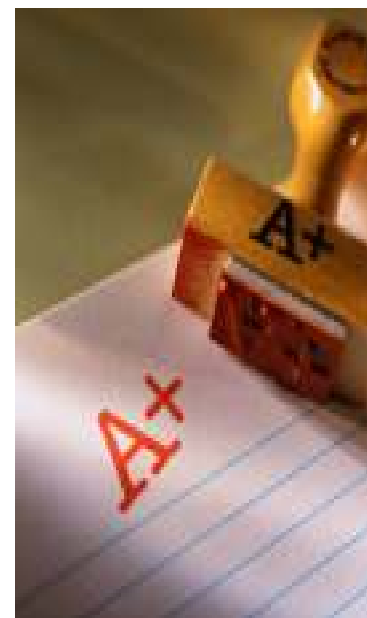
### Summer Workshops

Bridgeport teachers have many opportunities over the summer in the form of workshops, leadership opportunities, curriculum committees and seminars. Additionally, many teachers take college courses. Please note, the BOE cannot mandate your attendance at any of these activities. As a professional, you make the choice of the educational activities in which you want to participate.

## Mylearningplan.com

All workshop offerings are placed on MyLearningPlan.com. Sometimes teachers are automatically registered. However, when a workshop has **limited enrollment**, teachers must register. Accepted teachers' are then listed on the sign-in sheet and become valid participants. This process authenticates registration and attendance and aids the district in both planning and data collection. When more than the allotted number of people show up at a workshop, it compromises the integrity of the offering. The workshop presenters are unable to provide the proper level of assistance due to inadequate space, limited technology and handouts, or too few presenters.

Please follow the appropriate procedure for these workshops to avoid being turned away at the door.



### From the Grievance Office

- Teachers, please note that the Board of Education has upheld the contract language that mandates administrators to abide by the steps that are outlined in article 7.4 Teacher Assignment and Transfer. Read the language carefully and notify the BEA if your rights are violated
- **Save any posting for positions to which you are assigned.** Postings may be used as critical evidence in a dispute with administration.

If you apply for a posted position, please know that the BOE does not send a letter unless you are assigned the position.

### CEA Update by Linda Prokop, CEA Director-Fairfield County

- The C.E.A. Finance Committee and the Board of Directors unanimously voted for a \$0 dues increase for next year. It will still be brought to the C.E.A./ R.A. floor for a vote on May 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The candidates for the CEA Treasurer's position are the CEA Treasurer, Michael Freeman and CEA Director for New Haven County, Jeffrey Leake. They will debate at the Fairfield County Council meeting at Roberto's on April the 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The CEA continues to move forward to research a state insurance plan that might assist in the increasing costs of health insurance and prescriptions.
- CEA urges teachers to call and write their legislators for support in legislation to fully fund the annual contribution for the Teachers' Pension Plan over the next 25 years. The decision will be a made by June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### Superintendent's/Teachers' Roundtable Meeting by Gary Peluchette

Teachers from Bryant, Madison, Multi-Cultural Magnet, Beardsley, Winthrop, Hall, Hooker, Blackham, Read, Park City Magnet, Dunbar, and High Horizons met with Dr. Ramos on March 5<sup>th</sup> at City Hall. The main topic was substitutes/teacher attendance.

Teachers felt that one problem with the lack of substitutes stems from denial of personal days requested with valid reasons. Teachers will take sick days if they feel that personal days will be denied, thus preventing principals from planning ahead when a teacher is out of school. Teachers also felt it was ironic that when teachers are taken out of school for professional development to improve their teaching, many times there are no substitutes for them to ensure that instruction will continue in their absence.

A lack of substitutes district wide was reported. Many times classes are split, with teachers having over their contractual limit in their classrooms. Teachers felt that instruction is compromised not only for the students who have been split up, but also for the students whose teacher must now be responsible for additional children in their room.

Delegates felt that the air quality and cleanliness in our schools contributed to absenteeism. When conditions in schools are improved, teachers will remain healthy, and teacher absenteeism will decrease.

Another issue brought up was the lack of respect from principals. Some felt the social contract Dr. Ramos instituted was one sided. The climate in many schools is adversarial, and principals bully their staff.

It was also mentioned that there needs to be a schedule revision for next year in regards to testing. Teachers stated that the CMT's and online assessments are too close to each other, and questioned the validity of having these assessments administered so close together.

Thanks to all the teachers who attended to have our issues heard, and hope that this venue will lead to solutions.

**Bridgeport Education  
Association**

3543 Main Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06606  
Julie Kaffen  
Administrative Assistant

Phone: 203-416-0055  
Fax: 203-416-0066



**We're on the web!**  
**[www.beaunion.org](http://www.beaunion.org)**

## Substitutes

If you know of someone who has completed two years of college and is interested in substituting in the Bridgeport Public School System, please have them contact Human Resources (576-7097) and get an application immediately.

College students who have also completed two years can apply as well. Encourage them to fill out an application now so that they can begin substituting ASAP. College students can fill the pressing need for substitutes. Urge them to call today!!!

---

## Congratulations

We would like to acknowledge the following teachers who are receiving the Bridgeport Public Education Fund Outstanding Teacher Award:

Pandy Bandith  
Jennifer Gilbert  
Linda Pillo  
Frances Russell

Robert Davis  
Robert Greenberg  
Laurinda Rua  
Ida Scott

## **Dates to Remember**

Sat., April 28, 2007 9:00 AM CEA Collective Bargaining Conference

Mon., April 30, 2007 3:30 PM Health Benefits in Retirement Workshop, Aquaculture

Tues., May 8, 2007 4:00 PM BPEF Teacher Recognition, Cabaret Theatre

Thurs., May 31, 2007 3:30 PM Superintendent/Teachers Roundtable, City Hall Room 305

Tues., June 5, 2007 3:30 BEA Retirement Social, Testo's Restaurant