

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- PAF and State Supreme Court
- MPSERS Alert
- Shared Governance
- State Races
- Trustee Race
- Distance Ed at HFCC

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

January 26 Membership Meeting	2
State Races and Successes	3
Long-Time HFCC Trustee Defeated	3
Distance Ed & Oversight	4
1650 Website	4

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1650 PAF AND STATE SUPREME COURT

Presently, 166 Local 1650 members have contributed to the Local's Political Action Fund (PAF). This amounts to 86% of the Local's membership, short of the 93% of 1650 members who traditionally contribute.

Local 1650 PAF monies are not sent to candidates for national political office or national political parties. They are used to support local and State candidates whose decisions impact on HFCC's revenues and faculty bargaining rights.

In the past, Local 1650 members have been able to contribute by check or payroll deduction. A recent decision of the Michigan Supreme Court and

recently defeated Republican Chief Justice Clifford Taylor prohibits the College from processing PAF contributions through College payroll. This became effective with the November payroll. Local 1650 Area Representatives will soon be contacting members who opted for PAF payroll deduction asking them to fulfill their 2008 and 2009 pledges by check, made out to HFCC-FT PAF.

The Federation leadership very much appreciates the support which the vast majority of 1650 members have given to the Local's political efforts. PAF support is needed to prepare for an HFCC millage renewal, two HFCC Trustee seats, and City Council seats on the ballot in 2009.

MPSERS ALERT – STOP SB 1450

There is a considerable possibility and considerable fear that Senator Wayne Kuipers (Republican-Holland) will attempt to move and pass SB 1450 during the State Legislature's "lame duck" session.

SB 1450 gives community colleges the option to deny new employees the opportunity to participate in the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPSERS), a defined benefit system which guarantees a pension based upon years of service and earnings.

1650 members are urged to contact their legislators urging opposition to SB 1450 for the following reasons: (page 2)

MPSERS ALERT (page 1)

1. Over the decades, community college faculty, support staff, and administrative unions have negotiated wage settlements which took into account the obligations of community colleges to the State Retirement System. Had MPSERS obligations not existed and had they not been taken into account in setting wage standards, more institutional revenue would have been available for wage improvement.

Community College MPSERS pension and health coverage costs have been covered by reduced wage settlements over many years – and that will continue to be the case in the future.

2. MPSERS' pension and insurance benefits are increasingly important in competing with the private sector in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified community college faculty, staff, and administrators, particularly in high demand fields.
3. Recent studies show that absent retiree health benefits, employees are delaying their retirements. Such delayed retirements will have serious budget implications for community colleges in terms of salary and health insurance costs in the long term, and these should be taken into consideration.
4. In last year's resolution of Michigan's budget deficit, a graded health coverage premium and an employee contribution increase from 4.3% to 6.4% of earnings were enacted, generating considerable savings for MPSERS.
5. Given the losses in 401k, 403b, 457b holdings due to lax regulation of financial markets, the call to move community college employees into defined contribution systems and expose them to these markets is appalling and unconscionable.

Legislator contact information is available on the Legislative Page of the Local 1650 website:

hfccft1650.org. Sample letters can be found at the Local 1650 website: www.hfccft1650.org and at the AFT-Michigan website: www.aftmichigan.org.

HFCC SHARED GOVERNANCE

Several Local 1650 members have expressed concern regarding the status of shared governance at HFCC in general, with particular emphasis on strategic/operational planning and the assignment/delegation of several administrative functions to faculty.

In light of this, the Local 1650 January 26 General Membership Meeting will be

devoted to hearing membership concerns and suggestions regarding shared governance at HFCC.

All Local 1650 members are urged to attend this meeting to learn about HFCC's strong tradition of shared governance and the concerns that colleagues have regarding its future.

1650 SUPPORTED STATE RACES

All but one of the candidates supported by Local 1650 were elected to State office. Only Bob Blaine, an AFT-Michigan member in Saginaw running for State House, was defeated.

Elected to the State House

- Gino Polidori (Dearborn)
- Andy Dillon (Dearborn Heights)
- Vicki Barnett (Farmington Hills)
- Lisa Brown (West Bloomfield)
- Marc Corriveau (Plymouth-Northville)
- Kate Ebli (Monroe)
- Diane Slavens (Canton)

Regarding State House races, Michigan voters proved overwhelmingly hollow the threats of recall and defeat that far-right ideologues leveled against

incumbent Representatives who addressed the State's budget deficit last year and against aspiring candidates for office who are supportive of properly funding State programs.

Elected to the State Supreme Court

Diane Hathaway

The election of Diane Hathaway to the State Supreme Court and defeat of Chief Justice Clifford Taylor provide additional protection from State Supreme Court decisions which have undermined the bargaining rights of education employees and threatened the future of MPSERS retiree benefits.

Elected to the Wayne State Board of Governors

Gary Pollard

The election of Gary Pollard to the Wayne State Board of Governors certainly benefits the students and faculty of WSU, but is also a fine expression of appreciation for the work Gary has done in representing the interests of higher education, and particularly HFCC, as Chief of Staff for Dearborn State Senator Irma Clark-Coleman.

Each of these candidates for State office has contacted Local 1650 expressing their commitment to Michigan's higher education institutions and their deep appreciation of Local 1650's support.

HFCC TRUSTEE RACE

The two Trustee candidates endorsed by Local 1650, Sharon Dulmage and John Corbin, were unsuccessful in their bids for office.

The loss of incumbent Trustee and Board President Sharon Dulmage is particularly troubling. A graduate of the HFCC Nursing Program, Sharon has served as Trustee for 22 years and has been a devoted supporter and friend of the College and its faculty and staff.

The position of HFCC Trustee, especially since it also embraces the position of Dearborn Public Schools Trustee, is a demanding and time-consuming responsibility. In addition to shouldering this responsibility for 22 years,

Sharon has also been exceedingly active in many community service, organizations charitable events, and College functions.

College and School District employees owe a great debt of gratitude to Sharon for the quality and duration of her service. If you wish to express your appreciation to Sharon, you may write her at: 22621 Law, Dearborn, MI 48124.

Candidate John Corbin placed fourth among the five candidates for Trustee, garnering over 9,000 votes. As both local newspapers observed, John has a very promising future within the Dearborn educational community.

FACULTY ROLE IN DISTANCE ED

With distance education offerings expanding dramatically at the College, it is important that Federation members understand Article XII of the Local 1650 contract.

Among Article XII's many important provisions, four are of particular note:

XII.B.I. "Distance Education delivered by the College, delivered under its auspices, or received by the College shall be subject to initial approval, review, and reapproval of the division(s)/ department(s) traditionally responsible for instruction of the subject matter and/or content of the Distance Education offering."

Note that this provision requires

the approval of the Division, not simply the Division's Associate Dean, of any distance education course, whether developed by full-time or adjunct faculty.

XII.B.3. "A qualified full-time teacher shall have the right of first refusal in the development of any distance education course."

XII.B.5. "Teachers desiring to teach a Distance Education course shall be afforded the opportunity based upon the course assignment policies of the teacher's division/ department and relevant provisions of the collective bargaining agreement, provided that the teacher demonstrates to the division/department satisfactory proficiency in the

delivery system(s)."

XII.C.1. "A teacher preparing a Distance Education course shall be afforded up to four (4) contact hours of contractual released time or up to four (4) contact hours of extra-contractual assignment, at the teacher's option, during the College year immediately preceding the semester during which the Distance Education course is to be initially offered."

1650 members are urged to review Article XXII in its entirety if they are considering teaching a distance education course or if a Division is offering distance education courses which have not been approved by the Division.

1650 WEBSITE: hfccft1650.org

Consult the Local 1650 website to learn about the history of your union, your contractual rights and benefits, and legislation that affects your future and that of the College.

Teachers new and old to the College should review the informational links regarding 403b, 457b, and Roth 403b plans recently added to the Mutual Funds page.