



A Moral Budget

By Heather Modrow, East Ridge Elementary School
as shared with The HCDE Board on January 16, 2020

Budget season is upon us. The board has the hardest job of figuring out how to give everyone everything they need. You will hear more about a **moral** budget in the future including some solutions and things that should be in a **moral** budget. As you struggle to find balance between the money you have and the money it will take, I need you to think of all of the learners and all of the employees it takes to reach those learners.

Let's start where it all starts. Our Kindergartners. Imagine 20 five-year-olds in one classroom with one teacher. The expectation is that they need to learn how to read, add and subtract, and write sentences by the end of the year. One teacher, 20 five-year-olds. In Georgia, the teacher student ratio is 1 teacher for every 15 students. Cross the border into Walker county and every kindergarten classroom has an educational assistant. Kindergarten is the first experience most children have in school, and we are not setting them up to be successful and meet those high expectations of reading, writing and math. What would be the **moral** thing to do for those children?

Let's look at our ESOL learners. At my school we have 5 ESOL teachers who pull students from their literacy block to help them with language skills. However, that instruction is not in their native language. We have many students who come to us with zero knowledge of English and fall behind academically as they learn how to code switch from their native to English. Why don't we have bi-lingual classrooms where students who have zero English language can learn in Spanish and English together? There might not be enough students in a single school per grade level, but certainly in a learning community. What would be the **moral** thing to do for those children?

Of course, my passion, the special education learners. Our new inclusion plan has students spending more time in the general education classes including those who were in the self-contained special education class

last year. This year they are in their grade level class with various degrees of support. Sadly, the most significant students went from 5 hours of instruction from a special education teacher in the special education classroom per day to the standard one size fits all 30 minutes of reading and 30 minutes of math a day. Some might get a little more because I get creative and I am unwilling to leave them unsupported in their general ed class for that long. What would be the **moral** thing to do for those children?

What about the learners that have significant behaviors? (in my school the majority are in the primary grades and I believe educational assistants and smaller class sizes would reduce this number significantly) We have added a school counselor, but it's not enough. Some children are in crisis mode all the time. What would be the **moral** thing to do for those children?

Go back to that Kindergarten teacher. Of those 20 students. 3 have an IEP, 4 speak limited English, and 2 exhibit such severe behavior that they are well known by most staff even in a building of over 1,000 students. How is this teacher going to be able to differentiate enough to meet the needs of all the learners in that classroom alone? It's not just kindergarten. One 3rd grade class has 5 students with an IEP, 4 students that are ESOL including 1 newcomer, and 1 student with behaviors that prevent learning. This is common in my school and I'm sure it is common all over the county. What would be the **moral** thing to do for those teachers?

I can only speak about elementary as that is my life. But please keep all of the 45,000 learners and educators as the focus of your budget discussions. Pay particular attention to those students that are like square pegs trying to fit into the round holes of school. They deserve an education that meets their unique needs as well.

Moral means relating to beliefs about what is right or wrong for ALL.

From the HCEA President



This has been a challenging year for Educators across the county. HCEA has stood strong and stood firm in our resolve to support educators in finding their voice and sharing it boldly. We have seen teachers take a stand and are proud of their work. RED FOR ED is growing and we are organizing to address the challenges ahead.

Budget Season is upon us and the PECCA Team is prepared to stand our ground to get the raise we deserve. Be assured that compensation is our

#1 priority this year as we begin PECCA conferencing. Last year we made the tough decision to take the offered bonus and allow for supports to be put in place with the understanding that this year we would be coming back to the table to ask for more. We have heard teachers loud and clear. The Community says they want to 'take care of teachers' and we are going to hold them accountable to their words.

The issue of adequate, appropriate, and sustainable funding is one that has to be looked at beyond the borders of Hamilton county. It is an issue that we are taking to the state house.

Tennessee is 45th in the nation in funding per pupil. To get TN funding to the southeast average would cost \$1.2 billion. (The amount of money they 'found' recently to pay a company to monitor the voucher program.) That's only \$1200 more investment per student. TN has the revenue to make that investment without increasing taxes. It simply takes a decision to invest in education what the state is already collecting in tax revenue.

Currently, the state has \$6.7 billion in cash reserves. It has grown \$1.2 billion since August. It's good our state is financially strong, but it is immoral to have massive surpluses while education needs go unmet. We can do both! Withholding needed state funding from schools is a legislative choice and it's the wrong choice when you recognize the damage it does. If the state provided more funding, we could make the investments that are needed for our students and educators...without raising taxes! The state has the money, and they need to send it to local school districts. We have **ONE** shot at a child's education.

On Monday, March 16th there will be a Statewide Rally at noon State Capital. This rally is for ANYONE who supports Public Education to attend. Parents, students, community members...You are ALL invited to join us as we fight for the funding our students deserve. We will be taking a bus up that morning and returning in the afternoon. As it is a PD day, you are allowed to put in for a personal day and Dr. Johnson has agreed to follow the MOU in signing the requests. Transportation details will be sent to those signed up to attend.

TEXT RALLY TO 84693



HCEA OFFICERS

President
Jeanette Omarkhail

Vice President
Karen Wilson

Secretary
DJ Omarkhail

Treasurer
Lori Cleveland

Parliamentarian
Pam Hopkins

**Educational Support
Professional at Large**
Evalyn Rock

TEA UniServ
Theresa Turner

Office Manager
Cindy Atterton

Board Members

District 1
Veronica McCuiston

District 2
Amy Smith

District 3
Michelle Gooden

District 4
Tracy Davis

District 5
Tarrance Meadows

District 6
Jamie Kerns

District 7
Kendra Young

District 8
Amy Brown

District 9
Heather Modrow

Early Career Educator Representative
Erika Martin

HCEA Office
4655 Shallowford Road
Chattanooga, TN 37411

Phone: 423-485-9535

Fax: 423-485-9512

office@hceaeducators.org

Website:
hceaeducators.org

If you would like to have this sent electronically in the future please email president@hceaeducators.org



The active members of the Association in each faculty during the month of February may nominate candidates for the offices of secretary, treasurer, and the open Board of Directors seats, as well as NEA and

TEA Delegate seats by completing the approved nomination form.

Nomination forms will be available on the HCEA website, from the HCEA Office or from your Building Representative. All nomination forms must be **received** in the HCEA office by **February 28th**.

The Elections Committee will report all nominations to the Representative Assembly (Building Representative Meeting) at the **March 9th** meeting.

Building Representatives may nominate other candidates from the floor at the March 9th meeting providing they have the completed nomination forms. Nominees shall complete the approved nomination form no later than the adjournment of the meeting.

All candidates shall be given the opportunity to speak for 2 minutes at the March 9th Association Representative meeting.

All Candidates written bio and picture will be sent to members via personal email on March 11th.

Positions Open for Nominations for 2020

8 Delegates to the NEA RA in Atlanta July 2nd – 6th
49 Delegates to TEA RA in Murfreesboro, May 16-17

All candidates for offices shall have been active members of the Association for at least one full membership year immediately preceding their election. (3/30/19)

TEA District 5 Board of Directors Seat – 3 Year Term
HCEA Secretary – 2 year Term
HCEA Treasure – 2 year term
HCEA District Seats – Two Year Terms
District 2
District 4
District 6
District 8
Early Career Educator Representative – 2 Year Term
Educational Support Representative 2 Year Term



Voting will be held by secret ballot March 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, and 25 at the HCEA building from 9-5 PM. Other locations, dates and times during that window may be available and will be posted and communicated by the 1st of March.

You will need a photo ID to vote.

The ballots shall be counted on March 30, 2020 at 3:00 PM by three judges named by the election committee.

Anyone who is running for a position may have someone at the counting as a witness.

If the number of candidates equals or in less than the number of positions to be filled, the election will be declared by acclamation at the March 9th meeting.

If no candidate receives the majority of the votes cast, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates who have received the largest number of votes.

The Elections Committee shall report results to the president who shall them to be announced immediately via email to members personal emails.



Be the Change

by Erika Martin

We've heard the phrase, we've said the phrase but how many of us great educators are making the time to actually "Walk the walk" when it comes to creating change?

Educators are usually great at looking towards the future. Obviously, we want to make a positive impact, hence our daily work. However, I personally feel like education isn't reaching it's full potential in the present.

So that leads to two choices. I could remain silent hoping that somehow things will all work out. And truly, sometimes they do. Or I could seize an opportunity to speak out and speak up.

You can probably guess I'm leaning towards the latter option. I'm hoping that more educators join me in that mindset. There are definitely some things that need to change in education. It's time to be the change we wish to see in education. We really need to advocate for ourselves and tell our side of the story. So many others are trying to tell it for us!

This could mean contacting a legislator, going to a meeting or something else that could be out of your comfort zone. Do it anyways! It's worth it. 😊

Help Wanted!

The committees listed below are seeking members eager to get involved! Contact the person next to the committee

Political Action Committee- Tracy Davis
Constitution Committee -y DJ Omarkhail
Building Committee - Mandy Colvin
HCEA Teachers Banquet Committee - Veronica McCuiston
Exceptional Ed Committee -Karen Wilson,
Early Career Educator Committee - Erika Martin



February 3rd
Association Rep Meeting

February 27th Nominations
Due in Office

March 9th
Association Rep Meeting
Nomination Speeches

March 16th
Rally at the State House

March 17- 25, 2020 Elections

March 27- 28, 2020 TEA Minority
Affairs Conference in Memphis

APRIL 18, 2020
TUEAC Meeting in Nashville
Tennessee Urban Education Asso-
ciation Council

April 20, 2020
Association Rep Meeting

May 5, 2020
Annual HCEA Educators of
Excellence Banquet

May 15-16, 2020
TEA Rep Assembly in Murfreesboro

June 11-13, 2020
Summer Leadership Academy in
Murfreesboro

June 30- July 1, 2020
NEA Conference on Racial and
Social Justice, Atlanta

July 2-6, 2020
NEA Rep Assembly in Atlanta