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Membership Directory

The new membership directory is now posted in the members' only section of the PenSPRA website and was included as an attachment to the e-Comm e-mail. You can access the members only page at this link: <http://www.penspra.org/Resources.aspx>. If you do not have your member login information, please contact me and I will arrange to have it re-sent to you.

Publication Contest

PenSPRA's annual publication contest is ready for your entries! Look for all the information on our website or you should have received an entry form in the mail. The deadline for entries is February 7, 2014. Recognition in a contest like this is a good way to demonstrate your skills to supervisors and board members.

Thanks to our contest sponsor, Blackboard Connect, and here's the link:
<http://www.penspra.org/CommunicationsContest.aspx>

Charter school reform bill SB 1085 radio broadcast

On December 23rd, Senator Anthony Hardy Williams and Haverford School District board member Lawrence Feinberg debated SB 1085, the charter school reform bill. The broadcast was archived via this weblink and is easy to listen to through a computer.

The broadcast is a good example of the political arguments that are dragging down the issue of charter school reform. Much of the broadcast ends up revolving around the value of charters in general and little information on the specifics of the bill is even discussed in the broadcast. It is such a complicated topic; it is easy to understand why the general public doesn't have the time to research and understand this issue. It is concerning too that opponents of the bill are painted as indifferent to children in poverty, which is an untrue and unfair characterization. As always though, it's important to stay abreast of both sides of the issues that are of concern to us in public schools.

<http://why.org/cms/radiotimes/2013/12/23/debating-charter-school-reform-in-pennsylvania/>

Resolutions

It's a new year and that always means a resolution or two or perhaps just something new that you are going to try. Maybe you would like to run the idea past someone else before you take

on a new task though. Or maybe you have a recent experience you have had success with that you would like to share with your PenSPRA colleagues? Don't forget that PenSPRA has a LinkedIn group where you can post questions and get feedback from colleagues. Join today if you haven't already, or share your questions and experiences. The group is only open to PenSPRA members.

News from Around the State and Nation

Vote on SB 1085 likely later this month

http://www.ellwoodcityledger.com/news/state/pa-senate-set-to-tackle-charter-school-reforms/article_bbc1a0ae-3f73-5950-a1e8-4a92a196283b.html

Federal spending for education is up for debate this spring

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/01/02/15budget.h33.html?tkn=OTZFYg24VxGVO3IggR2ChISgghxfiT5QpeE&cmp=clp-edweek>

Teachers might find this a fun idea for the cold winter months

<http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/how-to-gamify-your-classroom/>

Some changes to the school lunch program again

<http://ht.ly/2CHve5>

A teacher in the K-12 charter school describes the working/learning conditions

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/living-in-dialogue/2014/01/15_months_in_virtual_charter_h.html

On the PA legislative agenda for the spring

<http://triblive.com/news/education/5369024-74/education-charter-schools#ixzz2piv2vOFn>

Could snow days be a thing of the past for next generation?

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/education/2014/01/08/For-three-Catholic-schools-Cyber-Days-replace-old-snow-days/stories/2014010801120000000#ixzz2pnu0be7c>

Social media tips from school administrators

http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/social-media-tips-administrators.shtml