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PenSPRA Symposium Registration Online Discount Extended until Feb. 24th

You are in luck! The online registration and discount for the PenSPRA Symposium has been extended until this Friday, February 24th. There is still time to get the best deal on what is already a great deal! A day with your colleagues to learn from the pros and from each other. All the information you need is right here:

<http://www.penspra.org/5105173120422/blank/browse.asp?a=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&c=51318&5105173120422Nav=|&NodeID=45>

The Blueberry Story

Another common comment about school finance that may come up for you during the budget time period is “schools should be run like a business.” Today I share with you a wonderful article called “The Blueberry Story” which perfectly illustrates why schools are not businesses. Of course we all understand that schools are governed by a myriad of complex regulations, and schools are not a free market. Why? We do not have a choice of products because students are not products. Schools can make wise financial decisions, but they will always remain a people heavy organization. This article helped me shape my thinking about school finance and more clearly articulate my district’s financial position, and I hope it is beneficial to you as well.
<http://teachers.net/gazette/JUN02/vollmer.html>

Budget ZINGER –

Did you know a family that sends two children through a public school district must pay taxes for 58 years* before the cost of their own children’s education is fully refunded?

**You should calculate this exact number using your cost-per-student and average property tax bill.*

Budget Calculator

I wanted to emphasize this useful tool developed by PSEA. This budget calculator quickly demonstrates how the recent budget cuts have affected every school district in the state.

<http://www.psea.org/apps/budget/budgetimpact.aspx>

News From Around the State and Nation

This article gives a different perspective on global school rankings that are often used by schools critics to condemn public school performance in the U.S.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/story/2012-02-16/us-schools-global-ranking/53110494/1>

This is great background information on public schools in PA. Lots of little facts you may need someday.

<http://www.wayneindependent.com/opinions/x1341779079/Statistics-on-public-schools-very-interesting>

This state budget editorial explains the new budget cuts well for your own reference, although it is probably too tongue-in-cheek for use in your community.

<http://emmaus.patch.com/articles/the-governor-fools-the-public-again>

The state is not reimbursing some schools for construction costs in a timely manner.

<http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/school-construction-could-be-on-hold-in-nepa-1.1271303#ixzz1mMh3MXQq>

And the new budget proposes to reduce construction reimbursements entirely...

http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/courier_times_news/state-budget-proposal-could-slow-school-district-construction/article_645322b2-27fd-5b73-9c96-1d9aa0802ab2.html

The Pennsbury school board has passed a nonbinding resolution in support of a bill that would outlaw teacher strikes

http://www.phillyburbs.com/my_town/falls/school-board-calls-for-state-law-to-outlaw-teacher-union/article_e66cd18f-3aa9-57ed-9daf-4471c1df93bb.html

One board votes to raise fees on extracurriculars

http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2012/02/mechanicsburg_schools_enact_fe.html