

## In This Issue

1. An Apple a Day...
2. Charter Bill Defeated for Now
3. The Titanic Letter
4. Survey
5. Good Read
6. Job Opportunity
7. News From Around the State and Nation

## An apple a day....

*Are the changes to the school lunch program raising questions in your district? Ones like "Why are you forcing my kid to buy a vegetable?" Here's a blurb you can use to explain the changes the federal government made to lunches in every public school.*

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 was passed by the federal government to improve the nutritional value of school lunches. Here are some of the changes you may have noticed here in the lunches at \_\_\_\_\_ district this fall, as a result of the new law.

1. A price increase of ten cents
2. Students must choose a fruit or a vegetable as part of their meal in order to receive the meal price. Without the fruit/vegetable students will be charged ala carte pricing, which is higher. (Full meals are also reimbursed \$.06 by the federal government and ala carte meals are not.)
3. More whole grain is required in bread products, but the total amount of grains per week must be reduced overall.
4. The amount of protein allowed per week is reduced.
5. All flavored milks must be fat free.

These changes have resulted in noticeably smaller portions. The reduced amount of grains and protein is supposed to be made up by additional fruits and vegetables. We recognize that these changes have raised questions, and we would be happy to answer any further questions you have on the new federal school lunch regulations.

Here are the exact changes as specified by the Dept of Ed, if you would like to include every detail:

A single food group based menu pattern based on fruits, vegetables, grains, meat and meat alternates, milk

Use of 3 age/grade groups for menu planning – grades K thru 5, 6 thru 8 and 9 thru 12

Minimum daily portion sizes and minimum weekly serving requirements for each food group must be offered

Require students to take ½ cup fruit or vegetable with every meal

Serve a variety of vegetables from each of these groups every week – dark green, red/orange, legumes, starchy and 'all other'

Half of the grain items offered must be 'whole grain rich' (contain at least 51% whole grain)

The number of servings of grain items and meat/meat alternates offered must be within the weekly ranges for each age/grade group

While a variety of milks must be offered at each meal, flavored milk can only be fat-free but unflavored milk can be fat-free or 1%

Average Calories per meal (averaged across week) must fall within defined ranges for each age/grade group

Average saturated fat content per meal (averaged across week) must be less than 10% of total Calories

No added trans fat or zero trans fat as shown on the nutrition panel

Charter bill (SB 1115) defeated

Last week a bill to reform charter schools, SB 1115, passed in the PA Senate and was expected to pass in the House. It was narrowly defeated Wednesday, however, and has now been delayed until next year. This press release from State Rep James Roebuck, Chairman of the House Education Committee, is a good summary of the pros and cons of the bill. Many public school education supporters were opposed to the bill because it still failed to even out funding to cyber charters and granted all charter schools nearly a year to spend surplus money; funds which will return to brick and mortar districts after the time ran out. I've also included a news article which provides helpful background.

<http://www.pahouse.com/PR/188101712.asp>

<http://pennbpc.org/support-dwindles-among-lawmakers-both-parties-charter-school-bill-stalls-house>

The Titanic letter

Diane Ravitch, who is a professor of education research at NYU and a popular blogger, recently asked readers to write letters to president Obama about the current state of our schools and Race to the Top in particular. She received nearly 400 letters in less than two weeks. None were in favor of Race to the Top or NCLB.

She wrote "I will raise one important question that no one in the media has asked: Why should a "race to the top" replace equality of educational opportunity? Races never produce equity. Isn't equity the fundamental mission of the U.S. Department of Education?"

I share one of the letters with you below, and I downloaded the PDF of them all; if anyone is interested in reading let me know and I can e-mail it to you directly.

<http://dianeravitch.net/2012/10/11/teacher-am-i-playing-in-the-band-on-the-titanic/>

Survey

Did you take our survey about the Symposium yet? If you did, thanks! If not, read on... The PenSPRA2013 Symposium Planning Committee is hard at work planning our state-wide Symposium held every March. If we follow our normal pattern, the Symposium will be held in the day before the PASBO state-wide conference at Pittsburgh's Convention Center. Although we have enjoyed a long-standing partnership with our PASBO colleagues, the Convention Center is a very expensive venue for our smaller group. Therefore, we are considering options which will keep facility costs down and still provide an informative program in an enjoyable atmosphere. We are asking for your input on this topic via a brief four question survey about the 2013 Symposium. Please take a few moments to complete it.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZNQL89Q>

### Good Read

Recently I read a great book which I found to have profound advice at both a personal and professional level. It was recommended to me by a friend who is a college professor, and is definitely not something I ever would have picked up on my own. The book is called *Daring Greatly* by Brene Brown. Book reviews are not the norm for our newsletter, but as communicators and educators in your communities I think it is a very valuable read. Particularly during these challenging times, we must feel as confident in ourselves as we possibly can in order to be the best advocates for our schools, and for our jobs. It is a fairly quick read, although the questions she arises in your mind will definitely linger!

### Job Opportunity

The Milton Hershey School (MHS) is seeking a Vice-President of Communications to provide communications expertise to the School. The Vice-President of Communications serves as a spokesperson for the School and is responsible for developing and implementing an effective communications strategy for both external and internal audiences. The position oversees all media and public relations efforts, utilizing traditional communications vehicles and newly developing mediums (particularly social media). This position provides leadership for a Communications Department of approximately 10 staff members.

The VP of Communications reports to the President of Milton Hershey School. This role also serves as a member of the Senior Leadership Teams, and participates in Board meetings. This VP is also a key member of the Crisis Response team. The VP of Communications partners with the other Hershey entities, including The Hershey Company, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, The Hershey Trust, and the Penn State University Milton S. Hershey Medical Center to create collaborative, synergistic opportunities. Bachelors degree – preferably in Communications, Journalism or a related field. 10 plus years experience in the Communications field, with at least 3 years in an executive leadership role. Experience in emergency crisis response. Demonstrated success managing national level media scrutiny and a strong track record of securing strong positive media coverage. Experience managing others and working as part of an executive team. Ability to multi-task at an extremely fast-pace required. Contact Barbara Nichols at (717) 520-2301 or [nicholsb@mhs-pa.org](mailto:nicholsb@mhs-pa.org) for more information about applying.

### News From Around the State and Nation

This link is not technically a news story, but it has good advice on using social media in a school district <http://www.getfreshpr.com/2011/04/how-school-districts-can-use-social-media-to-build-community/>

Two stories about the school lunch legislation

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/06/nyregion/healthier-school-lunches-face-student-rejection.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/06/nyregion/healthier-school-lunches-face-student-rejection.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

<http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/09/25/kansas-kids-rebel-call-school-lunch-legislation-baloney>

Two summaries of the defeat of the charter school reform bill

[http://articles.philly.com/2012-10-19/news/34585362\\_1\\_cyber-charters-charter-school-public-charter-schools](http://articles.philly.com/2012-10-19/news/34585362_1_cyber-charters-charter-school-public-charter-schools)

[http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2012/10/pa\\_house\\_pulls\\_the\\_plug\\_on\\_cha.html#incart\\_river\\_default](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2012/10/pa_house_pulls_the_plug_on_cha.html#incart_river_default)

PA has been reprimanded by the US Department of Education for easing up on AYP requirements for charter schools

[http://articles.philly.com/2012-10-17/news/34500562\\_1\\_charter-schools-ayp-pssa-scores](http://articles.philly.com/2012-10-17/news/34500562_1_charter-schools-ayp-pssa-scores)