

July 2008

“AGRICULTURE, THE ONLY INDUSTRY WE CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT!”

Hello friends,

Another month goes by and we continue to improve our communications and ensure that the messages we send are clear and factual. At this time, we are awaiting a response; to the letter we sent requesting accurate information regarding the actions and direction of the Hillsborough County School Board, from Ms. Mary Ellen Elia, Superintendent of the Hillsborough County School Board.

During a Mulrennen parent meeting, Ms. April Griffin, Hillsborough County School Board Member, stated that the problems facing Agricultural programs in Hillsborough County, is a systemic problem and we need to involve other industries that are effect by the vocational programs in schools. The loss of career and technical programs is happening all across the country, and it is not just Ag programs, but auto mechanics, nursing, and many other career and technical classes in our high schools. In many ways, the school boards across the nation are simply playing the hands they were dealt.

In order to get our message across, we must unite all vocational and technical industries to work together. We would like to create a committee, “The Blue Ribbon Committee” to work on educational issues. We need representatives from all industries to join forces and lobby our state legislators and congress to educate them on the long term ramifications of the decisions they are making on vocational programs in our schools.

This will give us the ability to support the school board and superintendents, when they need it. I don’t think this problem began in Hillsborough County, but my hope is that through the cooperation between the business community and the school board of Hillsborough County, we can be a model for other counties and states.

I hope you have a good month.

Thanks!

Dale McClellan, Federation President