

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

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Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County, An MST/NEA Affiliate

January 2004

TAAAC Changes Bylaws Regarding Membership Cancellations, Membership Eligibility, and Retiree Membership!

On December 3, 2003, the Association Representative Council took action on three significant Bylaw amendments impacting Sections 1, 2, 5, 8, and 9 of the Membership Article. In summary form, the impact of the amendments is as follows:

- Effective immediately, members wishing to cancel TAAAC membership must do so in writing between August 15 and September 1. The former deadline of October 1 no longer exists.
- Professional employees of the AACPS who hold a bachelor degree but not teaching certificates are now eligible for TAAAC membership.
- There is now a membership category for retired TAAAC members. **(1397)**

The complete text of the amended Bylaws is shown below:

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in the Association shall be designated as regular, Member Emeritus, or Retired.

Section 2. Any person holding a Bachelor's Degree or a Standard Professional Certificate or who is a professional employee of the public school system of Anne Arundel County or of the Association shall be eligible to become a regular member of the Association.

Section 5. Retired membership shall be offered to Board of Education employees who are active members in TAAAC at the time of retirement and are at least 45 years of age or who are eligible to receive a pension from an education employment retirement system. Retired members shall be charged a nominal membership fee, determined by the Board of Directors for TAAAC-R in consultation with the Board of Directors of TAAAC, for use of the office, receipt of local Association publications, and attendance at social events. Retired members shall also be required to maintain his/her appropriate membership in the MST/Retired and NEA-Retired. Retired members may not vote in TAAAC elections, hold office in TAAAC, or serve on the TAAAC negotiating team.

Section 8. If a regular member changes his/her educational position so as to change his/her membership category or membership eligibility, his/her membership status shall be changed immediately.

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Sheila M. Finlayson

COMMENTARY

Happy New Year!

As the new year begins, the first six months of the year will be filled with efforts dealing with the budget. The Superintendent submitted his budget to the Board of Education in December. The Board submits its budget to the County Executive in February. The County Executive submits her budget to the Council in May and the Council passes its final budget on or before May 30. We have a major role in that process. We actually have a tremendous responsibility. That responsibility is to help our elected officials, on all levels, to decide wisely how mon- eys should be spent.

Of course, our priority is education and that should be the top priority of every citizen of AACo. It is our responsibility to help the entire AACo. community to understand why education should be their number one priority also.

To put it simply, if we don't have a strong school system, which has the resources to educate every child at the highest level possible and the ability to recruit and retain the best

and brightest educators, our community will not continue to prosper. "Every time you stop (building) a school, you have to build a jail." Mark Twain in a speech delivered in 1900 spoke those words. Over 100 years ago, there was recognition of the need for a great school system. All of the Justice Department statistics tell us that in areas where there is a strong education system, there is a lower rate of crime.

AACo. is a rapidly growing community. We have more miles of waterfront property than anywhere else in the state. We are in close proximity to both Baltimore and Washington, which makes commuting to work a relatively easy ride. It also gives us easy access to any cultural or athletic events you might imagine. This is a beautiful place to live and work. A strong education system will allow AACo. to continue to be a place where people want to live. (3708)

When people look for housing in AACo., one of the first questions they ask is about the schools in the area. Realtors actually have a list of all of our schools, and especially our Blue Ribbon Schools, and use the list as a selling point. Without the pride and success of a strong school system, who would want to live here? What would potential residents think of a community that is not willing to fund their educa-

tion system adequately? That would surely cut down on the number of folks who want to live here and that would have a direct impact on revenues.

Then, there is the business community. We are an attractive location for businesses interested in relocating and those that are here tend to stay. They have been able to rely on our school system to provide them with an educated workforce. The under funding of our school system will jeopardize our ability to continue to provide the caliber of workforce businesses require and deserve. Economic development would be at risk.

I could go on about why education is important to AACo. but you know the story. You also know that you are the ones who make it all work. You are the backbone, the linchpin that holds it all together.

Now, I am going to ask you to go out and tell the rest of the community about the importance of what you do. Help them to understand the true danger we are facing if education is not adequately funded. And don't be shy. Educators deserve to be paid well, with good benefits. The evidence of the community truly understanding and valuing education will be in their ability to direct the County Executive and County Council to make education their top priority.

TAAAC Action Report

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County	Officers	Board of Directors	Editors
2521 Riva Road, Suite L 7 Annapolis, Maryland 21401 (410) 224-3330 (301) 261-8309	Sheila M. Finlayson, President Ron Russell, Vice President Kathy Naeseth, Secretary-Treasurer	Donzella Parker Bert Alice Liptak Yolie Marshall Timothy Mennuti	Deborah Cottrell Susie C. Jablonski Richard Benfer Edith M. McDougald Allison Crews Myrtle Link Darlene Murphy Bill Jones, Executive Director and Managing Editor Roxanne L. Vietmeier, Editor
(410) 841-6022 FAX (410) 841-5117			

From Contentia this month . . .

Rating Frequency...Why can't it get done right?

Every year the central office distributes a memorandum to principals explaining to them which members of their staff may need to receive a formal rating. No letter is distributed to identify those educators who do need to be rated. As a result many educators have their names on the list even though they do not need to be rated.

The problem is that four different rating frequencies apply to educators in four distinct situations, and educators are put on that list if it is possible that any of the four may apply, without regard to which individual situation exists. To confuse matters yet further, many school administrators perceive the list as a directive to rate everyone named on it, despite the term may, which is emphasized in the memo. (5340)

Here are the applicable standards with their matching circumstances:

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Untenured teachers	Twice per year, first due by December 1 st
Tenured SPCI and SPCII holders	Once per year
Tenured APC holders renewed before '95	Every two years based upon odd/even birth year
Tenured APC holders renewed after '95	Twice every five year certification cycle. One must be in the first of the five years, and the other in the third or fourth, depending upon birth year.

How is this screwed up so regularly? Here are two examples:

Jerry Howard, a teacher who holds an APC last renewed on July 1, 2002, was born in the fall of 1953. He now has a five-year certificate, which does not expire until June 30, 2007. He would have been rated last year, in 2002-03 since it was the first year of his new APC, and he does not need to be rated again until 2005. That's the fourth year of his certificate and it is a year commensurate with his odd year of birth. But, since Jerry does have an odd birth year, and we are currently in an odd year, Jerry would be on the list of those who may be rated, because based on his birth year, one of the frequency standards may apply. (8531)

Jerry's brother, Howard, was born in 1956. His APC was just renewed in July 2003 and he needs to be rated this first year of the certificate. His name appeared on the list last year because it was an even year, and he was rated even though a rating was not required. While he really does not need to be rated again until 2006, an even year and the third year of his certificate, his name will appear on the list in 2004, and he will likely be rated unnecessarily again. From the fall of 2002 through the spring of 2007, a span of five years, Howard will have been rated four times, twice unnecessarily.

In an environment where the workload on the educators and on the administrators is crushing, *why...?*

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

NEA Impacts Change in Assessments of Special Needs Students

On December 9, 2003, the U.S. Department of Education issued its final regulation for assessing students with disabilities under ESEA/“No Child Left Behind.” The bottom line: This regulation allows much more flexibility than previous Department guidance.

NEA is calling on the Administration and the Department to allow states and school districts that missed Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) solely due to the performance of the students with disabilities subgroup to review their AYP calculations in light of this new rule. Since the new rule allows more appropriate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, including out-of-level testing, NEA believes fewer schools will be inappropriately labeled.

Under the rule, these students would be tested against standards appropriate for their intellectual development and, for accountability purposes, their scores would be counted as part of their school’s performance. The intent is two-fold: to protect children with dis-

abilities from being excluded from accountability systems that provide valuable information to parents and educators and to ensure that schools receive credit for the progress of all children. The number of “proficient” scores counted for adequate yearly progress may not exceed one percent of all students in the grades tested (about nine percent of students with disabilities), although states may appeal for a higher limit. Without this flexibility, those scores would have to be measured against grade-level standards and considered “not proficient.” (7684)

The Administration has finally recognized how building greater flexibility into the ESEA/“No Child Left Behind” education law is essential to improving overall student achievement and closing the achievement gap. These much-needed changes in assessing special-needs students were strongly urged by NEA, teachers, parents and many others across the country over the last two years.

NEA urges the Department of Education to establish the same flexibility for states and schools in other areas of assessment, especially for English language learners, as well as for additional changes to the law to ensure that schools are not measured just on test results on one day.

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Section 9. Regular members shall be enrolled upon receipt of the annual dues or upon their signing an authorization for payroll deduction of dues. Payroll deduction membership in the Association shall continue during uninterrupted employment until rescinded in accordance with this section. Cancellations must be provided to the TAAAC office in written form bearing the original signature of the canceling member. Electronic correspondence and tele-faxed copies are not acceptable. Cancellations must be received between August 15 and September 1. An annual cash membership in the Association shall terminate at the end of the fiscal year in which it is received. Membership in the MSTA and the NEA shall continue in force in accordance with the bylaws of those associations.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

*Remeber these
important dates!*

January 26

**Education Funding Rally
Lawyer’s Mall
6:00-8:30 p.m.**

January 27

**AACPS Budget Hearing
Old Mill Senior High
7 p.m.**

January 29

**AACPS Budget Hearing
Parham Building
7 p.m.**

Welcome New Members

David J. Gehrdes

Jacqueline W. Lubniewski

Tracy S. Prater

James H. Todd

Susan B. Vervaeet

Deborah A. Yates

Donald K. Ziegler

Tax Season is Here

Robert Pellicoro will be available for appointments for tax preparations at the TAAAC office on the following dates. Call the TAAAC office to arrange an appointment. **This service is for TAAAC members only.**

Mon., Feb. 16, 2004
9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Thurs., Feb. 19, 2004
2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Wed., Feb. 25, 2004
2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Mon., Mar. 8, 2004
2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 18, 2004
2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Summer Employment Opportunity:

DRD Pool Service, Inc. is accepting resumes for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors, swimming pool managers and lifeguard instructors. No Experience Necessary, will train. For more information, call Noelle Navarro @ 1-800-466-7665.

Have you spotted the last four digits of your phone number? Please contact the TAAAC office.

DECEMBER ARC ATTENDANCE

The following schools, departments, and affiliates were represented at the December 3, 2003 Association Representative Council meeting:

Elementary - Annapolis, Belle Grove, Benfield, Bodkin, Brooklyn Park, Cape St. Claire, Central, Crofton, Crofton Woods, Eastport, Folger McKinsey, Fort Smallwood, Four Seasons, Freetown, George Cromwell, Glen Burnie Park, Glendale, Harman, Hillsmere, Jessup, Lake Shore, Lothian, Marley, Maryland City, Mayo, Meade Heights, Oak Hill, Oakwood, Odenton, Overlook, Pasadena, Pershing Hill, Point Pleasant, Quarterfield, Ridgeway, Rolling Knolls, Severn, Severna Park, Solley, South Shore, Southgate, Sunset, Tyler Heights, West Annapolis, West Meade, Windsor Farm – **Secondary** – Annapolis Senior, Arundel Middle, Broadneck Senior, Brooklyn Park Middle, Central Middle, Chesapeake Senior, Crofton Middle, Lindale Middle, Meade Senior, North County Senior, Northeast Senior, Old Mill Middle North, Old Mill Middle South, Old Mill Senior, Severn River Middle, Severna Park Middle, Severna Park Senior, South River Senior, Southern Middle – **Special** – Center of Applied Tech. North, Center of Applied Tech. South, Central Special, Infants & Toddlers Program, Marley Glen, - **Affiliate** – Counselors, EBOTA, EMAAAC, PPW's, Psychologists, Reading Teachers, SLAAAC

Fair Share Fees Coming?

On December 3, 2003, the TAAAC Association Representative Council acted on a motion resolved to pursue what is commonly referred to as an agency shop for Unit 1 employees. If successful, the effort will result in nonmembers, who have been enjoying the protections and benefits in the Negotiated Agreement at the cost of and to the detriment of dues-paying members, paying an agency fee. It is also referred to as a fair share fee. The amount of the fee, which will be computed annually, is that portion of membership dues nonmembers may be required to pay to offset the cost of serving them.

It is defined in law as:

...a reasonable service or representation fee, to be charged nonmembers for representing them in negotiations, contract administration, including grievances, and other activities as are required...

The effort will require two-steps. The pertinent provisions of the Education Article must be to render the fair share fee a lawful topic for negotiation, and it must be agreed to at the bargaining table. There will be benefits to both the employer and employee organization and we are cautiously optimistic here at the TAAAC office.

How did the Association Representatives feel about it?
The resolution passed unanimously.

Fund Maryland's Future

Support Public Schools

Rally in Annapolis

January 26, 2004

6:00 p.m.

Buses leave
High Schools
at 4:30

*WE ALL
NEED TO
BE THERE!*

**Support
Public Schools**



Join now! Visit MSTA OnLine, www.mstane.org for more information.

Sign up through your school representative or your local Association office.

Sponsored by the Coalition for Public School Funding, www.supportpublicschools.org

Students Count On Us!