

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

Volume 37, Number 6



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

February 2005

2005-06 Calendar to Be Revisited

At the mid-month meeting in December, the Board approved the calendar for next year. After much scrutiny and hearing the outcry of members, the Calendar Committee will reconvene to look at possibilities for changes.

The major concern revolved around the shortened Christmas/Winter Holiday for 2005-06. Currently, the winter holiday begins on Saturday, December 24 and ends on Sunday, January 1, 2006. Article 11.H.6 of the TAAAC Negotiated Agreement clearly states:

“When Christmas Day or New Year’s Day falls on Sunday, 12 month Unit I members shall not be required to work on the following Monday.”

That means 12 month Unit I employees will not be working on January 2, 2006, as the current calendar indicates. The AEL (Association of Educational Leaders) contract carries very similar language. **(8613)**

At the January Superintendent’s Teachers Advisory Committee meeting, the concern over the shortened holiday was brought to Dr. Smith’s attention. Issues around time to spend with families and difficulty in traveling so close to the holidays were shared by most in the room, with much dissatisfaction about schools being open on December 23rd.

Teresa Tudor, the new Administrator, Office of Volunteer Programs, has called a meeting of the Calendar Committee to look at options. If Friday and Monday are added as holidays, the Committee will have to find a place to add two days, since students must attend school for 180 days.

TAAAC, AEL, SAAAAC, AFSCME, PTA, and CAC will all have representatives on the committee. So, don’t make any plans yet!

“The time will come when your silence will not protect you.”

Mark Your Calendars!

Dr. Seuss’ Birthday

March 2, 2005

Are your school activities planned?

Let the TAAAC office know your wacky, cool ideas.

Have them published in the April **TAAAC Action Report**.

Inside this issue...

Commentary page 2

Contentia page 3

Secretary-Treasurer and
BOD Nominees
page 4-5



Bill Jones

Superintendent's Budget Request... Affordable? The answer's *YES*, unless Governor Ehrlich's budget digs too deeply into the county's pockets.

Most readers will remember the gloom and doom being projected as the FY04 budget was being constructed. The state was facing a potential shortfall of about \$1 billion, much of which was going to be passed along to the counties who were not rolling in dough themselves. Those projections were based at least partially on the dismal fiscal performance of FY03, during which suffering was widespread and collective bargaining agreements, here and across the state, were being left unfunded. Well, from that gloom and doom, the county budget office projected similarly low revenue performance in FY04, and time proved otherwise. FY04 ended with a budget surplus of revenues over expenditures here in Anne Arundel of \$56.1 million. Some of that was designated to FY05, but \$38 million remains in the general fund surplus.

But, that's not all. We are currently halfway through FY05, a budget

COMMENTARY

for which revenues were projected from within much of the same gloom from FY04's revenue deliberations. As you might be anticipating, it appears that revenues have been underestimated again in the current year. TAAAC's financial consultant estimates that FY05 will end with \$13.8 million in excess revenues over projections, and about \$7 million less in anticipated expenditures. That means we will see a budget surplus of \$20.8 million in addition to the standing general fund surplus.

“As you might be anticipating, it appears that revenues have been underestimated again in the current year.”

So, as those of you who are doing the addition as you read already see, FY06 will be starting off with a fund balance of \$58.8 million before even one penny in new revenues are collected. And, none of that money includes the tucked-away reserve in the required “rainy day” fund. **(0618)**

Full funding of Dr. Smith's budget would require \$45 million in new money from the county. Unless Governor Ehrlich's budget [which had not been released at the time of this writing] digs so deep into necessary services that the county will have to use its own revenues to fill gaps; then the entire request could

be funded quite easily, without draining the fund balance and leaving virtually all new revenues projected for FY06 for use by the county government side of the budget picture.

The TAAAC Negotiating Team has not yet reached a tentative agreement on compensation for FY06, and frankly, the odds of reaching a mutual agreement at this point without a declaration of *impasse* may be no better than even. But that should not deter us from supporting the full fund-

ing of the proposed budget. The funding proposed in it is sufficient to meet the needs of our students and provide a compensation package that is both reasonable and appropriate for our educators, if structured properly. Your negotiators will continue to work on that. In the meantime let us work to secure the necessary funding. To help, please contact your Board members and request full funding of the superintendent's budget request. Links to the e-mail addresses of the Board members can be found at www.aacps.org.

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 (410) 841-6022 (301) 261-8309 FAX (410) 841-5117	Sheila M. Finlayson, President Timothy Mennuti, Vice President Kathy Naeseth, Secretary-Treasurer	Donzella Parker Bert Alice Liptak Yolie Marshall Carol Petrosky	Enid Collison-Lee Susie C. Jablinske Richard Benfer Edith M. McDougald Ron Russell Ken Baughman Darlene Murphy	Bill Jones, Executive Director and Managing Editor Roxanne L. Vietmeier, Editor

From Contentia this month . . . *Teacher Assignments*

“I’ve never taught this class before!”

As the new school year or semester begins, or the administration in a school changes, teachers are often told they will not be teaching the grade, unit subject or classes they have taught for years. Many experienced teachers feel, and rightfully so, that they have “paid their dues,” and should have their choice to teach in an area where they have been previously successful. Honors and AP classes are considered by some to be the prime assignments that should be reserved for teachers with a proven track record of instructional success. So, imagine their dismay when they are informed that they will be instructing a more challenging segment of the student population.

The flip side of the coin has been the pattern, perceived or real, of placing new teachers into the toughest assignments; with relative inexperience to address the difficulties presented by challenging students. Who should teach honors classes? Shouldn’t these assignments be based upon experience?

The administrators in each school must take many variables into consideration when scheduling assignments. At the high school level, the High School Assessments will be given to 10th grade students this year, and an administrator may use that as a basis for placing experienced teachers into those classrooms. As we are all aware, students’ test scores are driving public education mandates and requirements from the local to national levels. In short, administrators have wide discretion in assignments for teachers. Administrators are protected by provisions of the *Education Code of Maryland, 6-201*, which states:

6-201. Appointment, tenure, and qualifications.

(b) *Appointment of professional personnel.* –

(2) *As to these personnel, the county superintendent shall:*

Assign them to their positions in the schools;

Transfer them as the needs of the schools require;

Although this provision gives administrators a great deal of leeway in assignments, they must be equitable; as provided for in the *Negotiated Agreement, Article II,D:*

“All Unit I members in a school shall be assigned total work loads of classes and other duties in as equitable a manner as reasonably possible consistent with a good program for pupils in the schools.”

Obviously, if you have five preps and other teachers in your department have only one, this assignment is not equitable. Call TAAAC if you believe your assignment is inequitable. Administrators have the right to assign teachers based upon the need of the students, but it must be done in accordance with the provisions of the *Negotiated Agreement.* (5233)

“All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” -Edmund Burke

TAAAC Holds Elections

The TAAAC Nominating Committee will be holding elections for the following offices:

Secretary-Treasurer
5 Directors
26 NEA Delegates

Candidates for Secretary-Treasurer and Board of Directors will be allowed to speak at the February ARC and Reps will be given election materials to take back to their schools. Elections will be held in schools during the month of February with ballots due back to the TAAAC office by 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22. Reps may bring their ballots to the March 2 ARC or postmark them no later than March 11th.

Secretary-Treasurer Nominee



Ron Russell

Since I am running unopposed for Secretary-Treasurer, I would like to use this space to thank all the teachers that have supported me. I pledge to serve you and this office to the best of my ability.

Last year's TAAAC election turnout was dismal. I encourage all TAAAC members to cast a vote in this year's election. There were a lot of schools last year that didn't turn in their school's ballots. If your TAAAC representative doesn't hold an election for your school, please call the TAAAC office so we can arrange for an election in your school.

Congratulations to Leslie Stefany!

Leslie Stefany, a teacher who formerly taught at Annapolis High School and an active TAAAC member, is having an extremely successful year teaching at a premiere high school in Baltimore City. Not only is she instructing top-tier honors and advanced placement students, she is being considered for the position of department chairperson for the coming school year. Although we were saddened by Leslie's departure from our school system last year, we are thrilled with her personal contentment and professional accomplishments. Way to go, Leslie! A nice reassurance that life does not cease after leaving AACPS.

National Board Certification

TAAAC Salutes the following members who achieved National Board Certification for the 2004-2005 school terms. We would like to congratulate these members for their hard work and dedication to children and to their own professional growth and development. Good luck and congratulations to the members who are on the path towards NBC.

Kristin Addleman, Maryland City Elem.
Charlotte E. Brooks, Old Mill Sr.
Susan Brown, Central Middle
Lynn Brydebell, Piney Orchard Elem.
Beth Anne Burke, Davidsonville Elem.
Jane R. Ciupek, Hillsmere Elem.
Phyllis Crabbe, Central Middle
Lisa A. Ferrer, Hillsmere Elem.
Kelly Fortune, Hillsmere Elem.
Janet Gonski, Crofton Middle
Michelle Kachik, Ft. Smallwood Elem.
Deborah L. Kibalo, Broadneck Sr.
Janet Lancaster, Broadneck Elem.

Sally Mastroberti, Marley Glen Special
Karen K. Muir, George Fox Middle
Beth A. Nasielski, MacArthur Middle
Danielle Nixon, Mills-Parole Elem.
Margaret Ottenbacher, Lake Shore Elem.
Marjorie A. Pugliese, Shady Side Elem.
Lynn Cara Schwalje, Central Middle
Tracey L. Spain, Maryland City Elem.
Janice Spicknall, Crofton Meadows Elem.
Linda Ann Taylor, High Point Elem.
Bonnie Tountasakis, Ridgeway Elem.
Dorothy Wysesong, Park Elem.

Board of Directors Nominees



Richard Benfer

I have been active and involved in our association as a building representative and MSTA/NEA delegate. I serve on the TAAAC BOD, chair of Credentials and Nominating Committees, and MSTA General Council. Your support is needed and appreciated to continue working for better salaries, optimum benefits, and improved working conditions.



Dorrie M. Chambers

Original
Running for Board of Directors
Responsible candidate
Individuality
Eager to learn

I am the RA at my school. I am a 30 year veteran teacher. I am seeking to become a member of the Board of Directors. I will be a Team Player that will work for you.



Enid Collison-Lee

I have served for over 20 years as a TAAAC representative. This year, I had the opportunity to serve on the TAAAC Board of Directors. I have learned so much and I feel I have served as a leader to represent all of you wisely on the important issues.



Shirley May Little

I have taught English and Language Arts throughout the county for thirty years. During that time, I held many TAAAC posts including representative, delegate, and committee member. If elected to the Board, I will focus on decreasing workload, maintaining current health care, supporting new teachers, and achieving a competitive salary.



Yolie Marshall

27 years Elementary Teacher
TAAAC member 27 years

We've done a lot in the past two years and with your vote and support we can do more in two more.

Membership – Increase
Teacher Contract
Understand & Implement
Planning Time
Salary Negotiations

We are TAAAC. Strong
Leadership – Strong Participation



Kathy Naseseth

Thanks for the opportunity to serve as TAAAC's Secretary-Treasurer. I would appreciate your support in my effort to continue to represent you on TAAAC's Board. We face many challenges – workload, planning time, salaries and health care. I have the experience we need to meet these challenges. Thank you.

Benefits of TAAAC Membership

There has been much talk recently about the distinction between the services and benefits received by TAAAC members and those received by their free-riding colleagues. Here is a brief comparison:

	<u>TAAAC Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
Advice on topics explicitly covered in the Negotiated Agreement	yes	yes
Representation on topics explicit in the Negotiated Agreement	yes	yes
Advice and representation on administrative transfers	yes	NO
TAAAC Sick Leave Bank [mid-term disability income protection]	yes	NO
Advice and representation on recommendations for suspension	yes	NO
Advice and representation on recommendations for dismissal	yes	NO
Advice and representation on tenure issues	yes	NO
Advice and legal representation on Workers' Compensation matters	yes	NO
Advice and legal representation on job-related child neglect complaints	yes	NO
Advice and legal representation on job-related child abuse complaints	yes	NO
Advice and legal representation on retirement issues	yes	NO
Advice and representation on disability issues	yes	NO
Advice and representation on student assault issues	yes	NO
Advice and legal services for complaints made by students/parents	yes	NO
Advice and assistance in certification matters	yes	NO
Free advice and service on all job-related legal matters	yes	NO
Limited free consultation on non-employment matters	yes	NO
Discounted representation on non-employment matters	yes	NO
Dues-Tab [up to \$50,000 in free life insurance]	yes	NO
Professional employment liability coverage at \$1,000,000	yes	NO
Reimbursement for property damaged incurred by student assault	yes	NO
TAAAC/MSTA/NEA Publications	yes	NO
TAAAC/MSTA/NEA Professional Development	yes	NO

Despite the length of the list of member-only benefits, the most important reason to join is to support the work of the elected leaders and staff who work hard to protect the interests of Anne Arundel County Educators. Virtually all operating expenses are funded by membership dues. Free-riders add to those operating costs but contribute nothing. As stated in earlier articles, the non-member down the hall has his hand in your pocket.

ARE YOU HIGHLY QUALIFIED?

Recently Human Resources began sending notices to teachers to let them know of their “Highly Qualified” status. The TAAAC office received several frantic phone calls from members asking what it all meant.

The Federal Law known as **No Child Left Behind** (NCLB) requires that all teachers of core academic subjects be “Highly Qualified” by the conclusion of the 2005-2006 school year. The Maryland State Department of Education, in October of 2003, adopted a **High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation**; also known as HOUSSE, for Maryland’s veteran teachers. The HOUSSE provides teachers a convenient method of achieving “Highly Qualified” status using one of several options under the NCLB Act. **(1540)**

Much of the confusion came about because many of the documents received by veteran teachers did not take into consideration that they already held Advanced Professional Certificates, and indicated that they were not Highly Qualified.

Teachers are urged to contact their Human Resources Specialist for clarification, questions and corrections. Information may also be obtained at the MSDE website. Go to www.marylandpublicschools.org, click on (1) News Room, (2) Publications, and then go to (3) Using Maryland’s HOUSSE.

Please note: HOUSSE is available only to teachers **not** new to the profession- those hired prior to the first day of the 2002-2003 school-year.

**Visit us on the Web at
www.mstanea.org/taaac**

Mirjam Spaar Donates to Locks of Love



Before



After

TAAAC congratulates veteran Special Educator, Mirjam Spaar for a recent unselfish act of love. Mrs. Spaar has enjoyed 28 years of service to special needs children in Anne Arundel County, but recently wanted to do more to share herself with children. Mrs. Spaar had not cut her hair since she was five years old. During the 2004 Thanksgiving Holiday she and her daughter, a second time donor, together had their hair cut and donated to **Locks of Love**. **Locks of Love** is a non-profit organization that provides prosthetic hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children 18 years of age and younger who are suffering from long-term medical hair loss. The prostheses that are created from the donated hair help to restore self esteem and confidence to these young folks enabling them to face the world and their peers. Donors must be able to donate no less than 9 inches of hair at one time. Mirjam was able to donate 19 inches of her natural hair, while her daughter donated 12 inches. **(0589)**

Mirjam, an active TAAAC member, has served as a TAAAC Association Representative and is now the chairperson of the Elementary Concerns Committee. Hats off to her!!!

Workshop Presenters Needed

MSTA is looking for presenters for workshops at the annual Convention in Ocean City Maryland, October 21 and 22, 2005. This is a great opportunity for teachers and support personnel who have a particular expertise or have some specific skills or knowledge to share with their colleagues from around the state. MSTA provides expenses and one night's accommodation per workshop given by a presenter. Individuals can enhance their resume and hone their presentation skills through this opportunity. The proposal form can be downloaded from MSTA's web-site www.mstanea.org

Proposals are due to MSTA by February 28, 2005.

Employment Opportunity

Spend Summer in the Sun

DRD Pool Management, Inc. is accepting resumes for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers. No Experience Necessary. For more information, call Noelle Navarro at 410-923-7665, 1-888-785-7665 or email: n_navarro@drdpools.com

KITCHEN & BATH REMODELING

Chuck Gibson and Century 21 Home Improvements

are offering TAAAC members:

50% OFF KITCHEN CABINET REFACING*
20% OFF ONE-DAY BATHROOM REMODELLING

FREE IN-HOME DESIGN CONSULTATION

CONTACT CHUCK GIBSON PHONE (443) 254-5392
CGIBSON911@COMCAST.NET

* 50% discount applied to the lesser of the base or wall cabinet total

Have you spotted the last four digits of your phone number? You may be a winner! Contact the TAAAC office.

Teachers Speak Out at Budget Hearings

Several teachers came out to share their concerns with the Board on the Superintendent's budget recommendation. A special thank you must go to the following TAAAC members who spoke:

Vice President Tim Mennuti
Sarah Weller, ECI teacher from Freetown
Andrea Sporre, AVID teacher
Kate Blakefield, Middle School Foreign Language
Brian Whitley, AVID teacher

TAX PREPARATION

R. J. Pellicoro & Associates is accepting appointments for tax preparation on the following dates at the TAAAC office:

Thursday, February 17	2 PM – 7 PM
Monday, February 21	9 AM – 5 PM
Wednesday, February 23	2 PM – 7 PM
Tuesday, March 1	2 PM – 7 PM
Friday, March 18	2 PM – 7 PM

To schedule an appointment, please call the TAAAC office.