

# TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

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

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## TAAAC Membership Committee Reads



Co-chairs Sarah Weller-Bentivegna and Anthony Rezendez, organized and participated in a Dr. Seuss birthday event at two of our public libraries. On Saturday, March 3, Sarah and Anthony, along with two squads of volunteer readers spent time at the North County and Eastport branches reading to school-aged children as part of our annual celebration.





Bill Jones

## The Desperation and Cheney-Like Aim of Restructuring

Those who have taught in the state of Maryland for enough years will remember the name of Bob Embry. Mr. Embry is a former president of the Maryland State Board of Education and was among the decision-makers when MSPP (Maryland School Performance Program), a statewide precursor of NCLB, was hatched and imposed on all of us.

The three most vocal and most influential proponents of MSPP, which also contained punitive measures for schools and teachers, including a restructuring component for the so called “failing” schools, were then Governor William Donald Shaeffler, then and current Maryland Superintendent Nancy Grasmick, and Maryland Board of Education President Robert Embry. Well, I had the opportunity back in the early 90’s to hear Mr. Embry speak on the wonders of MSPP and to question him. Mr. Embry’s candor was both surprising and impressive, but it also revealed the futility in the

# COMMENTARY

application of penalties to schools and teachers. (0891)

Mr. Embry’s response to a critical question made it quite clear that neither MSPP nor its nationwide off-spring, NCLB, were the product of careful analysis. Nor were

law enforcement system does not operate on the same desperate philosophy. If it did, when cops couldn’t catch the culprits, they’d have to shoot the victim.

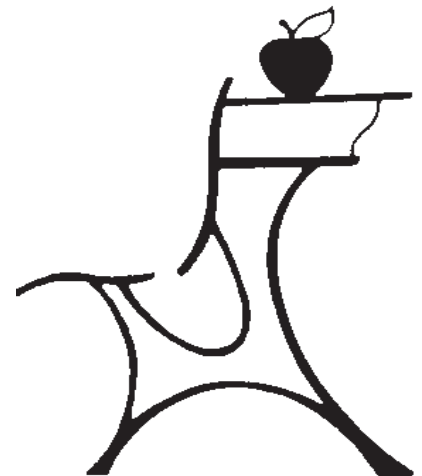
*“...biggest problems in public education are student motivation, parental involvement, and adequate funding. But we have no control over those...”*

they intended to strategically and effectively address the primary obstacles to real improvement in student learning. Both then and now, such schemes are little more than acts of desperation and bad aim. (1193)

Mr. Embry was asked to identify the worst problems in education and relate them to MSPP’s targeting of schools and teachers. Here’s his answer, as close to verbatim as I can recall:

“The three biggest problems in public education are student motivation, parental involvement, and adequate funding. But we have no control over those, so we have to hold the schools and teachers accountable.”

I for one am very grateful that our



## Visit us on the Web at

[www.mstanea.org/taaac](http://www.mstanea.org/taaac)

### TAAAC Action Report

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## From Contentia this month . . . *Sick Leave Absence and Substitution Call-In Procedures*

In accordance with the Negotiated Agreement, sick leave shall be applicable on all duty days of Unit I members during the regular work year. No employee should be required to furnish a doctor's statement verifying the use of sick leave unless the absence exceeds three days, at which time, an administrator may request such information. Employees must report absences, and the requirement for employees to notify the school system of absences is memorialized in Article 5, F. of the Negotiated Agreement, which requires:

*“When Unit I members are to be absent from school they shall notify the principal or designee as soon as possible. Members shall not be eligible for sick leave unless they have notified the principal or designee of their impending absence at least one hour prior to the time they are required to report for duty, except that principals shall waive this requirement if they adjudge the situation to be one which prevented members from complying.”*

Over a decade ago, the BOE implemented a telephonic absence call-in system for employees, which has been in continuous use since that time and now includes an electronic internet-based call-in system as well. At the time of implementation, TAAAC and representatives from the BOE agreed that a telephone call-in system (and subsequent internet-based system) would qualify as the “designee” included in Negotiated Agreement language. Unit I employees are therefore only required to notify the telephone call-in system, the internet-based system, or the principal. Only one contact is required. **If you are an itinerant Unit I employee, working at more than one school, you still can be required to make only one contact to report your absence.** You must report your absence at least one hour in advance of the absence to be eligible for sick leave, unless emergency circumstances prevent that contact. In this situation, you should report the absence as soon as circumstances allow. **(0454)**

All principals have electronic access to the reporting system and should appropriately utilize that access to determine absences and subsequent substitute needs. Unit I employees cannot be required to provide their own substitutes or make more than one contact to report an absence. If you are given an administrative directive to make more than one contact to report an absence or secure your own substitute, please contact TAAAC staff for appropriate follow-up.

Recently distributed memo notwithstanding, be reminded that eligibility for sick leave requires no more than an hour's notice. Further, neither certification of an illness or disability, nor any estimate of duration, need be provided to the employer until more than three consecutive days are utilized. Any member(s) treated any differently than prescribed above should call the TAAAC office. **(2636)**

## TAAAC Membership Effort Breaks 1,000

In an effort of unprecedented success, TAAAC staff, leaders, activists, and building reps have combined efforts and enrolled more than 1,000 new members during this recruiting year. The net impact of the effort was a net gain of 600 members even after turnover, and an approximate 30% reduction in the number of Unit 1 free-riders left to continue to drain our resources. **(6249)**

## NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the **Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee** and the **AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary)**. Nominations will be accepted until the May 2, 2007 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (S) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

**Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee**

**AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary)**

**Have you spotted the last 4 digits of your phone number?**

*Call the TAAAC office to claim your prize!*

## NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the **MSTA Delegates**. Nominations will be accepted until the June 7, 2007 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (S) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

**MSTA Delegate**

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Anchor Aquatics Inc.** is now training and hiring LIFEGUARDS for 2007. For more information, please call 410-956-0744 or visit [www.anchoraquatics.com](http://www.anchoraquatics.com)

### Huntington Learning Center

Join a great team of teachers. Flexible hours and paid training. Certified Teachers are needed in the areas of:

Elementary

Middle

High School/Upper Level Math

SAT Prep

Call Huntington Learning Center 410-384-9692 or e-mail resume to: [hlcpasadena@earthlink.net](mailto:hlcpasadena@earthlink.net)

### Spend Summer in the Sun

DRD Pool Service Inc. is accepting applications for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers. No Experience Necessary – Free Training. For more information, call Noelle Navarro at 410-923-7665, 1-888-785-7665 or email to: [n\\_navarro@drdpools.com](mailto:n_navarro@drdpools.com)