K PANTONE 286+C

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

Volume 41, Number 3

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County, An MSTA/NEA Affiliate November 2008

C'mon, Enough is Enough!

In the spring of 2008, Unit I employees sent a message to their Association Representatives by voting against a valuable salary package because of the extra work time it required. So, why are we still working so many hours beyond what's required?

Our recent bargaining survey shows that 37% of our educators are still working 46 to 52 hours per week. Another 33% are working 52 hours per week - to more than 65! Clearly it is time for a reminder and a plea from your Association.

Your reminder is that the only tasks that can be required of a teacher beyond the paid workweek is individual planning for instruction and one evening activity which is generally your back-to-school night. The plea from your Association is that you become much more reluctant to continue doing more and more for free.

In these first few months of the school year, TAAAC has received many (very many) calls from teachers with work load complaints such as the following:

- Staying late for meetings that run overtime
- Losing lunchtime (which is unpaid) to supervise a student, meet with an administrator, answer e-mails or keyboard data
- Working weekends to keep or update records (does the term *Service Capture* ring a bell to any specialists who may be readers)
- Taking personal time for required reading assigned by the principal
- Preparing for discussion group participation following the required reading
- Late parent conferences
- Paid individual planning time usurped for data entry or meetings
- being coerced into chaperoning dances and other events

With sufficient time and space, this list can go on almost indefinitely. It's time to say "No" – for your own health and welfare and for that of your families. Educating young people is a demanding job, but it was never intended that you had to forego your personal and family life to do it.

It is also good to remember that employers are reluctant to pay employees who are willing to work for free.

K PANTONE 286+C

COMMENTARY

Timothy Mennuti

How did you find out? That was the response that I got when I called one of our high schools to inquire about a teacher who had been hurt in a malicious incident involving a sort of booby trap. The student ultimately received a 5-day suspension. Unfortunately, the teacher will be out for several weeks with her injuries. The worst part about this is that the teacher really cares about her students and is deeply concerned that she is not able to teach.

How does the system work? Simply put – victimized teachers appear to be a lesser priority to the AACPS than the offending student. In some cases, when you the teacher are injured, the AACPS will actively intervene to support the student who assaulted you.

Is this an unusual situation? No. And the irony is that if a student charges you with touching or threatening at any level – even in jest - the wrath of God will descend upon your head. You may well be removed from your classroom until the investigation is complete. What happens if the student files a false report? Normally, absolutely nothing.

Take a good look at the Student Handbook – The word assault doesn't exist. According to BOE Administrative Regulations, there are no assaults in AACPS.

Try this for size: A teacher on hall duty was grabbed from behind, had her arm twisted and was seriously injured. When the teacher went for help she ran into an assistant principal, immediately backed up by a second assistant principal, whose main concern was that she NOT file a police report. Real concern for her physical situation was conspicuously absent. After all, without a police report there was no assault.

"Golly Gee! Couple the 93% reduction in expulsions with the magical achievements of PBIS, supported by "missing referrals," and we must truly be living in Oz."

Thankfully the TAAAC incident reports are giving us a better understanding of what is actually happening in some of our schools. The picture is far from pretty.

Earlier in October, I picked up a local paper to read on the front page, "County Schools: Expulsions down 93%."

My first thought was that they had printed the April Fools edition early. When I realized that this was a serious story, I proceeded to read it in its entirety.

What does a 93% reduction in expulsions mean? Well judging from the e-mails, calls and letters we are receiving, it appears to mean that an entire group of students who should have been expelled are still in our classrooms.

This wonderful news that those who should be expelled are still with us is supported by the complaints I am receiving about "lost referrals."

Golly Gee! Couple the 93% reduction in expulsions with the magical achievements of PBIS, supported by "missing referrals," and we must truly be living in Oz.

For those of you still living and working in the real world, keep those cards, letters, e-mails and incident reports coming. Keep a sharp eye out for assaults on students as well. We all know that most of those incidents are not revealed to or reported by the media. The only people kept in the dark are the parents and the Board members. The teachers know better.

TAAAC Action Report

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County
2521 Riva Road, Suite L 7
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(410) 224-3230 (410) 841-6022
(301) 261-8309 FAX (410) 841-5117
www.mylance.org/taaac

Officers
Timothy Mennuti, President
Richard Benfer, Vice President
Ken Baughman, Secretary-Treasurer

Board of Directors
Enid Collison-Lee
Colleen Renda
Sara Silverman
Shirley Little
Sarah Weller-Benvegna
Tamara Johnson
Anthony Resendez
Michael Barnett
Donzella Parker Burt
Diana Peckham

Editors
Bill Jones, Executive Director and Managing Editor
Roxanne L. Roach, Editor

K PANTONE 286+C

From Contentia this month . . .*Your Paycheck – Nov. 2008*

Have you checked to see if you are being paid correctly?

You get a paycheck twice a month, and every year you are notified of your salary and certification status. You are instructed to call Human Resources to request changes or report errors.

You may wonder what chance there is that there is an error in your pay. It is unlikely that a mistake has been made, but it's enlightening to note some cases we have come across in the last few months. One member received only cost-of-living raises for many years, never getting the step increase from one year to the next. Another member never received the appropriate salary increase when the APC was earned and credited. Not such a big deal? How about $60-80,000 in lost pay, now thankfully retrieved!

Other members have had problems when they signed their initial contracts. Human Resources inaccurately computed their graduate credits resulting in a significantly smaller paycheck over a three to five year period. Not until a recalculation was requested were the errors discovered. Recouping the lost funds has not been an easy task.

Additionally, some new Unit I members hired early in the last recruiting season were told at the time of initial employment that they were properly certificated and placed accordingly on the salary schedule. In the last month or two, however, a number of these members received notification that an audit of their credentials showed they lacked certain required graduate credits or didn't meet certification requirements, resulting in a reduction of salary and/or placement on a conditional contract. In one known instance the member was threatened with a reduction to substitute standing, losing both pay and benefits.

Take the time to review your salary placement and graduate credit count. When the time comes for you to advance from an SPC to an APC, be sure to request that HR updates both your status and pay; the same advice should be followed when you earn 30 credits beyond your present standing. Get written verification of any changes and requirements. Keep all your records. Protect yourself.

TAAAC Welcomes New Uniserv Director

Mark Beytin
UniServ Director

Mark has been working in the UniServ capacity at TAAAC since May. In September his position was made permanent by MSTA. In the year previous to this assignment, Mark did UniServ work on the Eastern Shore and in Frederick County. Besides advocacy work, he bargained contracts in Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties, both for teachers and education support professionals. He also consulted on bargaining in Caroline and Dorchester Counties.

In a previous life, Mark taught secondary school mathematics for three decades and served as President of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County for six years. He has been very active on the political and legislative scenes, where he has worked hard to get officials elected and legislation passed to promote the public schools' agenda.

Mark has been happily married for 39 years to his wife Abby, a kindergarten teacher. They have three grown sons who do not live at home.

K PANTONE 286+C

TAAAC Educator Incident Report

Note: This Incident Report can be used any time you believe that a record of an incident needs to be created. Please make a copy for your files and forward the original to TAAAC. Feel free to tear off and use. Make additional copies as necessary.

Name _____ **Work Location** _____

Phone Number _____ **Personal e-mail** _____

Date and Time of Incident _____

Location of Incident (i.e. classroom, hallway, cafeteria, etc.)

_____

Names of Individuals or witnesses involved (Important: Identify students or other minors on this Report by initials only)

_____

Description of Incident: (mark all that apply)

O Assault O Harassment O Personal property damage
O Battery O Intimidation O Transfer of bodily fluid
O Threat O Intervention in fight O OTHER

Severity:
O Serious injury O Minor Injury O Potential for Immediate Injury O No Injury

Checklist:
O Referral (disposition _____)
O First Aid O Medical Treatment O TAAAC Called O Police Report
O Workers' Comp Employer's First Report O Workers' Comp Employee Claim to TAAAC

Brief Description of Event [if appropriate describe injury] - (Use additional pages if more space is required.)

Good Deeds Gone Punished…

A Follow-up Report

For those subscribers who read last month's article on TAAAC's shortage of UniServ staff, there is good news times two.

1. On October 10, MSTA stepped up to the plate and provided the service you have been paying for. TAAAC received written assurance that Ralph Straley would be staying with us until former UniServ Mike Carrington's return to TAAAC. Many of you may have already met Ralph. He is a returning retiree from the Teachers Association of Baltimore County. In addition, TAAAC was given a calendar which assigned an additional MSTA staff member for each day who would be available either at TAAAC or at MSTA to help cover calls for assistance during periods of heavy activity.

2. On the evening of October 24, I received e-mail from MSTA management finally giving an exact date of Mike Carrington's return. By the time this article is read, Mike will have started. His return was scheduled for Halloween.

Many thanks to Mr. Straley for his persistence and his conscientious efforts on behalf of TAAAC members.

K PANTONE 286+C

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Christina F. Ashley
Francis W. Bedard
Rhonda L. Biskup
Nicole R. Bourgeois
Julia R. Cimino
Amy E. Cunningham
Lisa R. Evans
Jeffrey L. Filson
Nichole L. Fitzgerald
Anthony Gayle
Ashley J. Groenevelt
Sharee N. Harris
Kimberly J. Hart
Kathleen M. Johnson
Molly A. Jones
Carole A. Lunney
Michael P. Norton
Anuradha Prabhakara
Elizabeth A. Purnell
Erin M. Quigley
Laura R. Raffaelli
Susan C. Reinhart
Michael J. Rellard
Ryan L. Sackett
Masami M. Stratton
Margaret E. Sullivan
Sara M. Veinbergs
Robert G. Werntz
Kimberly R. Whitney
Carolyn C. Winters

Don't Go in Alone!...a Reminder

TAAAC continues to receive calls from members who submit to questioning and interviews from administrative and supervisory staff, child protective services investigators, and even police officers without telephoning for representation first. Please be reminded again that it is generally in your disinterest to do so. This is especially true for TAAAC members who receive professional representation as a member benefit.

If called-in to speak with a police officer or child protective services case worker, remember that you are not under no obligation to speak with them at all, and obviously not at their beckoning. When this happens, your proper action is to obtain contact information from the interviewer. Let this hopeful interviewer know that you intend to cooperate once you get proper counsel. Then, part company. Once you forward the contact information to TAAAC, an interview will be scheduled if it is appropriate to do so, and you will have representation and assistance in preparation. Don't risk your career with someone whose objectives do not include your best interest.

If on the other hand you are called in to speak with an administrator, you can be required to submit to an interview. BUT if your performance or conduct is the focus, you are entitled to union representation OR you are under no obligation to speak (U.S. Supreme Court ruling: 420 US 251).

So, your appropriate action is to let the administrator know that you are willing to answer questions after seeking counsel with TAAAC, and let the TAAAC staff schedule a conference by appointment. IF the administrator refuses to let you leave (quite a rarity) take notes, but do not answer questions.

"The mind grows by what it feeds on."

-J.G. Holland

The TAAAC office will be closed during the Thanksgiving Holiday

November 26-28

K PANTONE 286 C

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County
2661 Riva Road, Suite L7 • Annapolis, MD 21401
410/841-6082, 410/224-5350 or 301/261-6309 • Fax 410/841-6117

MSTA MARYLAND STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION — Great Public Schools for Every Child

For Local office use only
NEA $_____
MSTA $_____
TAAAC $_____
Total $_____

2008-2009 ENROLLMENT FORM

New! Fast! Easy! Sign up online! Pay by credit card! Visit **www.mstanea.org**

_____ **FREE!** Dues-TAB insurance! See attached registration.
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

FIRST NAME | M.I. | LAST NAME | ☐ Mr. ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms.

ADDRESS

CITY STATE | ZIP

HOME PHONE

HOME EMAIL | WORK EMAIL

DATE OF BIRTH ___/___/___ (MONTH DAY YEAR)

ETHNICITY (Optional) ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Hispanic ☐ Black ☐ Caucasian (not of spanish origin) ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ Multi-Ethnic ☐ Other

POLITICAL PARTY ☐ Democratic ☐ Republican ☐ Independent ☐ Other

REGISTERED VOTER ☐ YES ☐ NO

TAAAC
LOCAL

SCHOOL NAME

POSITION

SUBJECT

___/___/___
HIRE DATE

Check your salary level for dues computation:
☐ Over $35,688 ☐ $17,844 - $35,688 ☐ Below $17,844

Check one: ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time (_____/10ths)

Method of payments:
☐ Payroll deduction (See below, sign and date.) ☐ Cash / Check ☐ 10 Month ☐ 12 Month

Payroll Deduction Authorization I authorize the Board of Education to deduct from my salary bi-weekly payments for membership dues as indicated herein. I understand that such deductions shall continue from year to year for the dues set annually unless I rescind such authorization in writing to TAAAC over my original signature in accordance with local by-laws (between August 15 and September 1). In case of my resignation or termination, the Board of Education shall deduct the balance of my yearly dues from my final paycheck.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ EMPLOYMENT DATE _____

Dues payments are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Dues payments (or a portion) may be deducted as a miscellaneous itemized deduction. Annual membership dues to the NEA includes $5.15 for NEA Today, $3.10 for NEA-Related and/or $19.50 for the Higher Education publications. The NEA publication(s) received by members are based on membership category. Annual membership dues to the MSTA includes $5.62 for the MSTA Active/Life.

Application for Membership in TAAAC Sick Leave Bank The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide contained pay benefits to participants in the Bank for qualifying, catastrophic personal illness during regularly scheduled duty days after regular sick leave has been exhausted. Membership is subject to approval by the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

Have you received treatment for any illness or condition in the past 90 days? ☐ Yes ☐ No if yes, explain: _____

Please enroll me in the TAAAC SLB. SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Voluntary Contribution Authorization for Fund for Children and Public Education I hereby authorize the following contribution:

PAYROLL DEDUCTION PER PAY PERIOD ☐ $15, ☐ $10, ☐ $5, ☐ Other $_____.00 SIGNATURE _____

The NEA, MSTA and applicable LOCAL Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use these contributions for political purposes, including but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal, state and local offices. Contributions to the Fund for Children and Public Education are voluntary. Making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although the NEA, MSTA, and LOCAL Fund for Children and Public Education requests an annual contribution of $1.00 per paycheck this is only a suggestion. Any member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount or may contribute nothing at all, without affecting his or her membership status, right of benefits in NEA or any of its Associations.
I understand that I am making a gift contribution to the Fund for Children and Public Education and that one third of my contribution will go to the NEA FCPE, one third to MSTA FCPE, and, if applicable, one third to the local FCPE.
Contributions or gifts to the NEA, MSTA, and LOCAL Fund for Children and Public Education are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect the name, mailing address, occupation, and the name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of $200 in a calendar year. Federal law prohibits the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of the NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates and their immediate families will be returned forthwith.

PLEASE RETURN WHITE, CANARY, PINK & BLUE COPIES TO YOUR LOCAL • RETAIN THE GOLD COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS